H. O. MERRIMAN

THE TALKING MACHINE REVIEW

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Sound Recording by Electricity 1919 – 1924

H. O. Merriman

INTRODUCTION.

In 1970, the late Mr. Horace Owen Merriman, M. B. E., B. A. Sc., wrote some memoirs of his life which remain unpublished, but with the permission of his daughter, Mrs. John G. Prinsep, we are privileged to publish in our pages Mr. Merriman's chapter on the electrical system of recording developed by him and Major Lionel Guest, O. B. E., and in particular its application to recording a part of the Ceremony of the Burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey, London, on 11th. November, 1920. The notes on the official programme were written by Capt. Merriman.

We are grateful to Edward Moogk who acted as out intermediary.

We begin with an autobiographical note written by Mr. Merriman in 1970. He died in Ottawa on 19th. July, 1972.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The Memorial Gramophone Record made during the ceremony of the burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey on 11th. November, 1920, was the first published record made by any electrical process. (A microphone and amplifier were used.)

I know of no other electrically made record published prior to 1925.

This process was invented and developed by the Honorable Lionel George William Guest, O. B. E., retired Major in the R. A. F. and also by Mr. Horace Owen Merriman, M. B. E., B. A. Sc., retired Captain in the R. A. F.

The Honorable L. G. W. Guest was the 4th. son of the first Baron Wimborne. He was born on 16th. November, 1880, and died on 27th. September, 1935. He was a financier in London, and was well-known in Canada, particularly in financial circles.

Mr. H. O. Merriman is the son of Robert Henry and Charlotte Owen (née Greening) Merriman. He was born on 21st. November, 1888 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. He was educated in a Hamilton Public school and at a Collegiate Institute in that city. He received his B. A. Sc. in 1911 from the University of Toronto. Mr. Merriman retired in 1954 from the position of Engineer in charge of the Interference Section, Radio Branch, Department of Transport. He is now living in Manotick, Ontario.

THE STORY OF THE GUEST-MERRIMAN RECORDINGS.

In 1917, Major, the Hon. Lionel Guest, O. B. E., saw the need of improved methods of communication from aircraft observing enemy positions to infantry. We submitted to the Air Ministry a proposal to use an electrical loudspeaker in aircraft for this purpose.

I was then attached to the "Air Arm Instruments" and instructed to develop an electrical loudspeaker sufficiently loud to be heard from air to ground. I tested many types of loudspeakers, including experimental and obsolete types loaned by the General Post Office Museum. Tests were then made using a vibration motor activating a compressed air sound producing valve. The vibration motor, invented by Fessenden, is used by the Submarine Signalling Co. of Boston, Massachusets, U. S. A., and the sound valve was invented by Sir Charles Parsons and used in the "Stentorphone" gramophone. After the Armistice, the R. A. F. abandoned the electric loudspeaker development.

Major Guest and I considered what peace-time use could be made of the findings already made in the research for an electrical loudspeaker. We decided to develop a method of making phonograph records by electricity using the Fessenden vibration motor.

At the time and until 1925, the original method of sound recording employed by Edison and Bell was used in making records commercially, but with refinement in details. This method necessitated intense sound should be directed to the diaphragm which vibrated the stylus which engraved the wax. These old records had a limited range of frequency and the sound was distorted and noisy.

According to our invention, the sound waves to be recorded were picked up by a microphone similar to a telephone transmitter which controlled the electric currents and after amplification were fed into the vibration motor. The stylus engraved the wax in a manner similar to that employed in recording studios at the time. Thus electric power was used for recording rather than the power of the sound as used at that time.

Our discs were warmed in an oven by a spirit lamp to a temperature of about eighty degrees fahrenheit and placed on a turntable driven by clock-work at eighty r. p. m.

Test recordings were played back from the soft wax by a needle-operated diaphragm reproducer of the commercial type of that day. After many adjustments to all parts of the system and when play-back indicated sufficient improvement to warrant a permanent record, a duplicate recording was made and not played back so as to avoid scratching the soft wax. This recorded soft wax was then sent to the Columbia Graphophone Co. in London, to be processed according to their standard method and permanent shellac compound record discs made.

A van was equipped with complete facilities for making sound records electrically. As far as is known, this was the first sound recording van. The experimental work consisted chiefly in improving the fidelity of the microphone and electrical amplifier, and in designing a Fessenden vibration motor and mechanism for engraving the wax records. The instrumental and vocal music for the tests were provided by friends. The high standard of the music and the criticism by the artistes was of great value.

The experimental and development work was carried on largely by "trial and error"methods as few satisfactory instruments were available at that time to measure resonance of the mechanical and electrical components or the fidelity of the reproduced sound.

The first sounds used for testing the laboratory were speech, instrumental and music. At a later stage of development, the electrical recording equipment was set up in the studio of the Columbia Graphophone Co. in London. Records were made of various types of music by the electrical method at the same time that Columbia made their commercial records.

An attempt was made to compare the reproductions by the two methods of recording. The electric recordings contained more surface noise because I did not have sufficient experience or knowledge of the technique of engraving the wax. The range of tone was greater on the electrically made records, but there was considerable distortion.

Arrangements were made to record the service of the Burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey on 11th. November, 1920, with the approval of the Lord Chamberlain, the Dean of Westminster Abbey and the help of Mr. Sidney Nicholson (afterwards Sir Sidney) the organist and choir master.

MEMORIAL GRAMOPHONE RECORD

(by GUEST-MERRIMAN ELECTRICAL PROCESS)

RECORDED DURING THE CEREMONY OF THE BURIAL OF THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

On NOVEMBER 11th, 1920.

THESE Records are published by the COLUMBIA GRAPHOPHONE CO. at cost price for the benefit of the Fund for the restoration of Westminster Abbey. The double-sided 12-inch disc record of "Kipling's Recessional" and "Abide with me."
(Choir, Congregation and Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards.)
will be available on and after December 17th, 1920. :: :: ::

*The price for the two hymns together is **7/6** post free in Great Britain and **8/6** for addresses abroad.*

Orders should be sent by post only to BOX Q62 "TIMES," LONDON or to the PRECENTOR, WESTMINSTER ABBEY. Envelopes to be marked "MEMORIAL RECORD."

As the service was conducted in different parts of the Abbey, it was necessary to place microphones and electrical signal buttons near the sanctuary, the choir screen and the grave, and to run the necessary connecting wires. The sound recording van was placed outside near the south Transept entrance and the wires run through an opening made by the removal of a small pane of glass, after obtaining official approval, which was contrary to the wishes of the vicar.

In order to install and partly conceal the wiring and the microphones, we worked (through the dust of centuries) for three days and part of the nights. But some microphones with their horns were not completely concealed and Queen Alexandra asked why they were placed among the memorials!

Traffic along the route of the funeral procession was restricted and each of us was given a permit from the police. Helen (my wife) received the salutes from the guards along the route. Helen signalled from her location in Edward the Confessor's chapel a few seconds before the music commenced in the chancel and choir. When the choir moved up the nave, Mr. Guest signalled from near the Warrior's grave in the nave. I was recording in the sound van outside, assisted by Messrs. Allen and West, our recorder and mechanic.

We made an attempt to record each of the musical items in the Service, but unfortunately only two hymns were sufficiently well recorded to be published.

At that period of the development of our method of recording, all our equipment required considerable refinement and the quality of the music was poor according to modern hi-fi standards. The background noise was also high because of an unfortunate accident to the wax in the warming oven.

We did, however, sell a number of records of the two hymns sung by the Congregations, Choir and accompanied by the Band of H. M. Grenadier Guards, and donated the profits to the Westminster Abbey Restoration Fund.

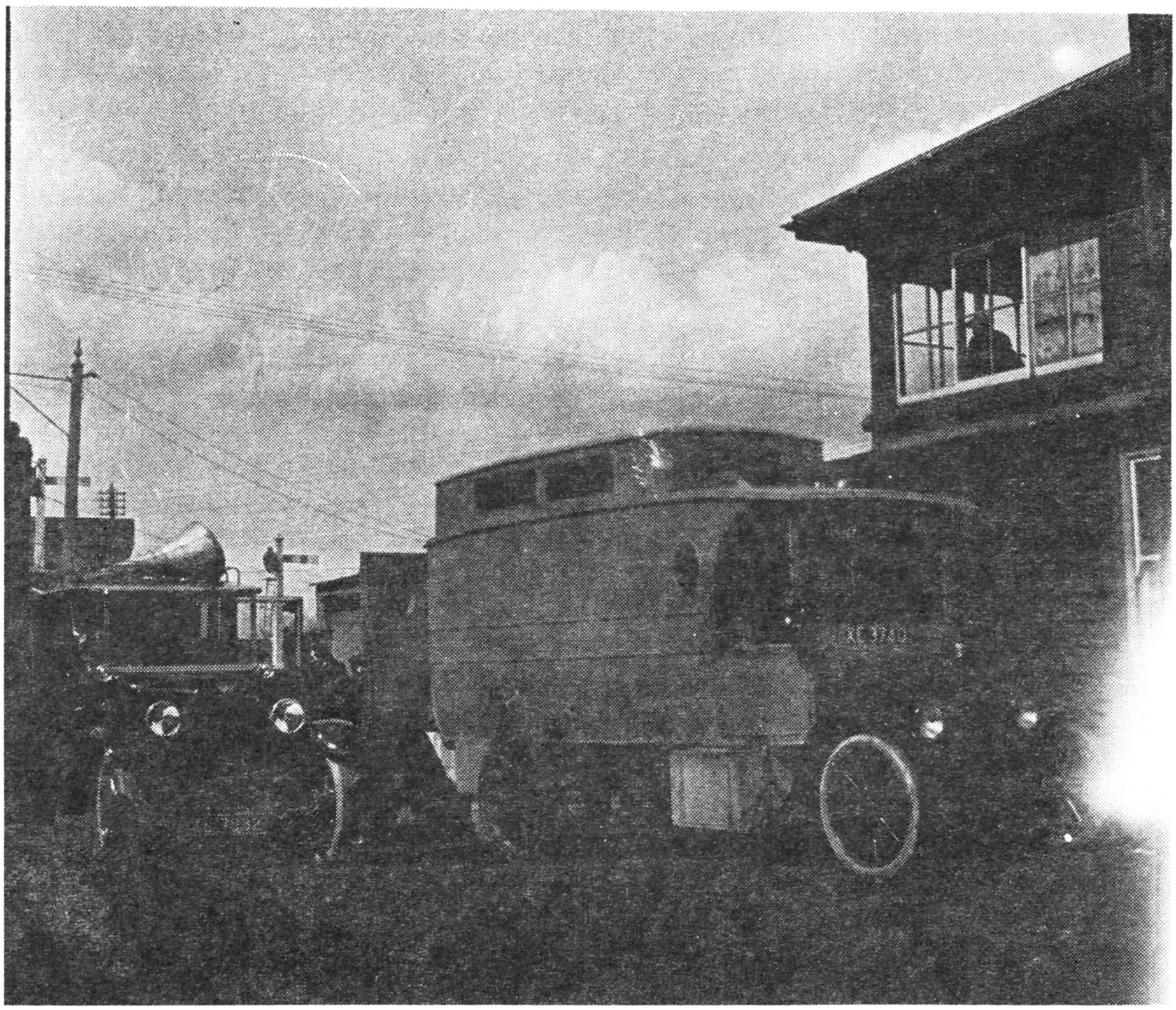
The Director of the British Museum considered the recording to be of national interest as it was the first made by the use of electricity, the first made of a national event, and a recording of a great national service. At his request, we presented to the British Museum a copy of the record and a copper matrix (so that additional copies of the record could be made in the future.) These were enclosed in a wooden case with a suitably engraved brass plate.

It is interesting to note that it was about five years after this date that our competitors, the large record manufacturers with almost unlimited financial and technical facilities, offered electrically recorded records for public sale.

Mr. Guest arranged for us to record the music of the great organ in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris played by Monsieur Marcel Dupré. So in April, 1921, Helen and I went to Paris for a month.

Owen, my oldest son, who was about sixteen months old at the time, was left in the care of Mrs. Kingston, a great friend of ours, who we called Aunt Nan. She was a Scottish widow who, with her six year old son, lived across the square from us in Hampstead Garden.

Helen and I went by train, boat, and again by train to Paris, while the recorder, Mr. Allen and mechanic, Mr. West, drove the van,which, at the Notre Dame Cathedral, was placed near the west end of the south wall of the Cathedral, and wires for recording and signalling were run to the organ gallery in the west end.



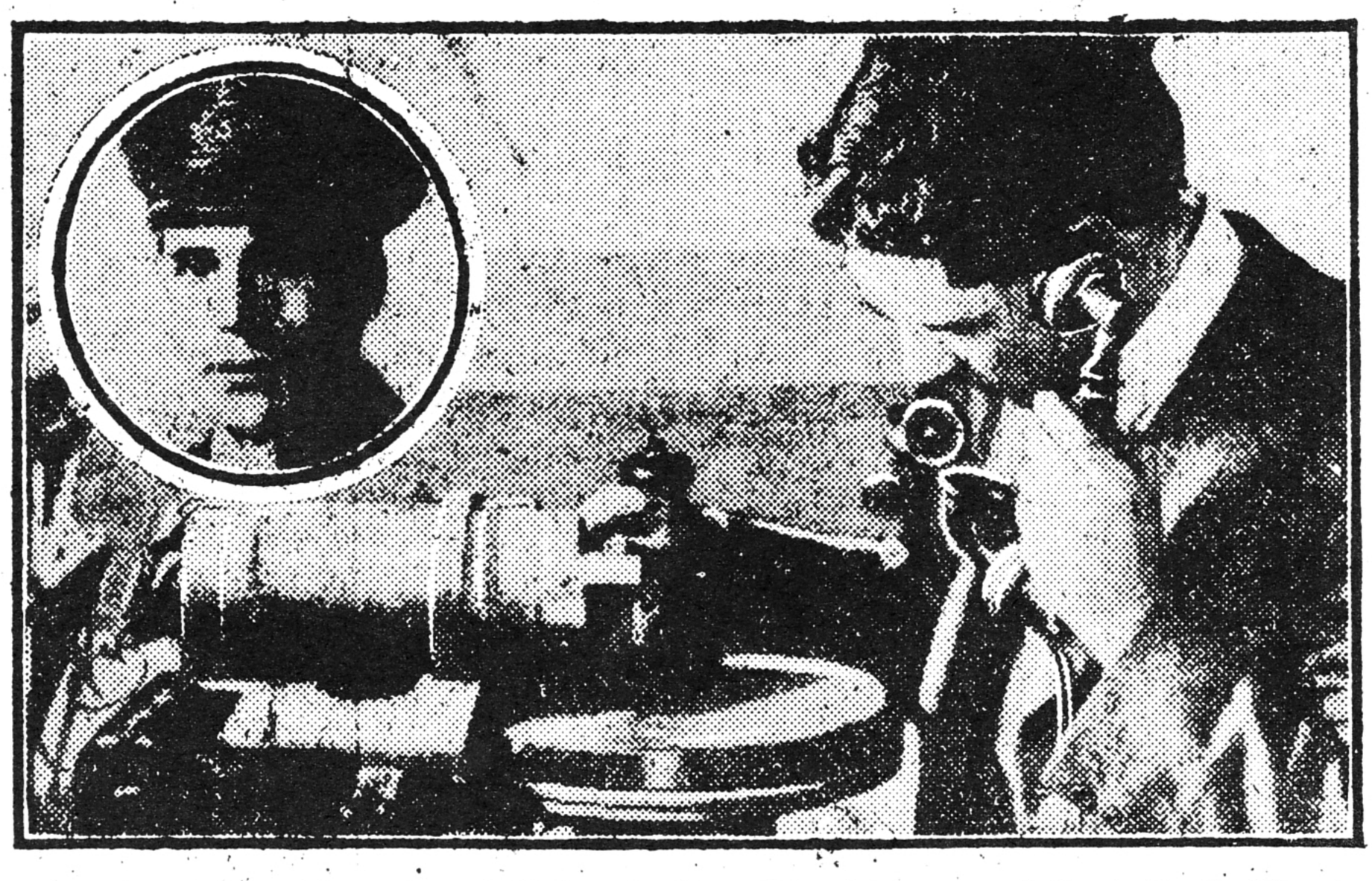
The Guest - Merriman recording van.

There were several organs in the Cathedral including the smaller organ in the east end used to accompany the choir and the great organ in the gallery in the west end.

This great organ which we recorded was of great interest to us. At that time it had no electrical equipment and the console was mechanically connected to the organ pipes by levers, bell cranks and very long rods, which resulted in stiff keys. (Monsieur Dupré strengthened his fingers by exercising on a dummy keyboard at home.) The air for the organ was supplied by bellows operated by three, four, or five men on tread-mills using hands and feet. Since at that time I could not make an amplifier of high gain without prohibitive distortion, it was necessary for us to use relatively intense sound at the microphones. We therefore installed about ten microphones within the organ near the various types of organ pipes. Each microphone was connected to an electrical control panel where the intensity from each was controlled and the circuits combined to give the desired musical balance. Helen's music ability was invaluable in this work as I have a poor "ear for music".

We spent about a month recording at the Cathedral, experimenting with various types, positions and combinations of microphones and various adjustments of the amplifiers.

GRAMOPHONE RECORDS ABBEY SERVICE.



By means of an invention of Major the Hon. Lionel Guest and Capt. H. O. Merriman, gramophone records were taken in Westminster Abbey during the burial of the Unknown Warrior. Two telephones, concealed in the statuary, transmitted the singing to the instrument on a lorry outside. Two records of the congregation singing "Abide with me" and Kipling's "Recessional" are being published by the Columbia Coy. at 7/6 each, including postage. Orders should be sent to Box Q62, *Times*, Printing House Square, E.C. 4. The profits go to *The Times* Westminster Abbey Fund. Capt. Merriman at the recording instrument. In circle: Major Guest.

Mr. Merriman's article continues on the next page.

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ZONOPHONE PSEUDONYMS

re.'S T A N L E Y K I R K B Y'

While we had every reason to believe that his real name was Joseph Baker as we said in our previous issue, we have now seen an Affidavit presented in Court naming him as J A M E S Baker. We apologise for misleading readers.

W B Sherman Copy

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

THE FUNERAL SERVICE

OF

A British Warrior

ON

THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY

OF THE SIGNING OF

THE ARMISTICE.

NOVEMBER 11th, 1920.

Start = One minute silence. (about 5 seconds before the hour.)

Stop. Two minutes silence.

Sammy = a Sammy. Spring about 2 minutes, upon receipt of the first image to the memory.

10 am.

Beginning at 10 a.m., the Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards, under the direction of Captain A. WILLIAMS, M.V.O., Mus.Doc., will play the following :—

OVERTURE .. .. "In Memoriam" .. .. *Sullivan*

"MARCHE FUNÈBRE ET CHANT SÉRAPHIQUE" .. *Guilmant*

MORCEAU SYMPHONIQUE .. "Rédemption" .. *César Franck*

SLOW MOVEMENT FROM SYMPHONY "Killed in action" *A. Somervell*

At 10.45 *a.m. the Choir and Clergy, headed by the Beadle and the Cross of Westminster, will move from the Nave to the High Altar, singing the following hymn :—*

10.45 SILENCE ON

"THE SUPREME SACRIFICE."

O VALIANT Hearts, who to your glory came
Through dust of conflict and through battle-flame ;
Tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved,
Your memory hallowed in the Land you loved.

Proudly you gathered, rank on rank to war,
As who had heard God's message from afar ;
All you had hoped for, all you had, you gave
To save Mankind—yourselves you scorned to save.

Splendid you passed, the great surrender made,
Into the light that nevermore shall fade ;
Deep your contentment in that blest abode,
Who wait the last clear trumpet-call of God.

Long years ago, as earth lay dark and still,
Rose a loud cry upon a lonely hill,
While in the frailty of our human clay
Christ, our Redeemer, passed the self-same way.

Still stands His Cross from that dread hour to this,
Like some bright star above the dark abyss ;
Still, through the veil, the Victor's pitying eyes
Look down to bless our lesser Calvaries.

674

These were His servants, in His steps they trod,
Following through death the martyr'd Son of God :
Victor He rose ; victorious too shall rise
They who have drunk His cup of Sacrifice.

O risen Lord, O Shepherd of our Dead,
Whose Cross has bought them and whose Staff has led—
In glorious hope their proud and sorrowing Land
Commits her Children to Thy gracious Hand. *Amen.*

The Congregation is asked to join in singing the Hymn

Choir assemble at altar.

O GOD, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home ;

Beneath the shadow of Thy Throne
Thy Saints have dwelt secure ;
Sufficient is Thine Arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the Same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone ;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away ;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home. *Amen.*

Mr Sherman Take.

4

Then shall the Congregation kneel and the Precentor shall say :

LET US PRAY.

Lord have mercy upon us.

Answer : *Christ have mercy upon us.*

Lord have mercy upon us.

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; But deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

At 11 *o'clock there shall be kept* 11 o'clock.

SILENCE

for the space of two minutes. after one minute.

After which shall be sung :

THE CONTAKION OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED.

Ps

GIVE rest, O Christ, to Thy servants with Thy Saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

Thou only art immortal, the Creator and Maker of man, and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and unto earth shall we return : for so Thou did'st ordain when Thou created'st me, saying, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. All we go down to the dust ; and, weeping o'er the grave, we make our song, Hallelujah.

Take

SWITCH OFF

Then shall the Dean say the following Collects, all devoutly kneeling :

O GOD, Who hast prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding ; Pour into our hearts such love toward Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O ALMIGHTY GOD, Who hast knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of Thy Son Christ our Lord ; Grant us grace so to follow Thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

MAY Our Lord of His Mercy grant unto us, with all the faithful departed, rest and peace. *Amen.*

But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life : and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. *Amen.*

THE LESSON.

After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands ; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb. These are they which come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God ; and they serve him day and night in his temple : and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat : for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life : and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

W.P.A.

GIVE WARNING

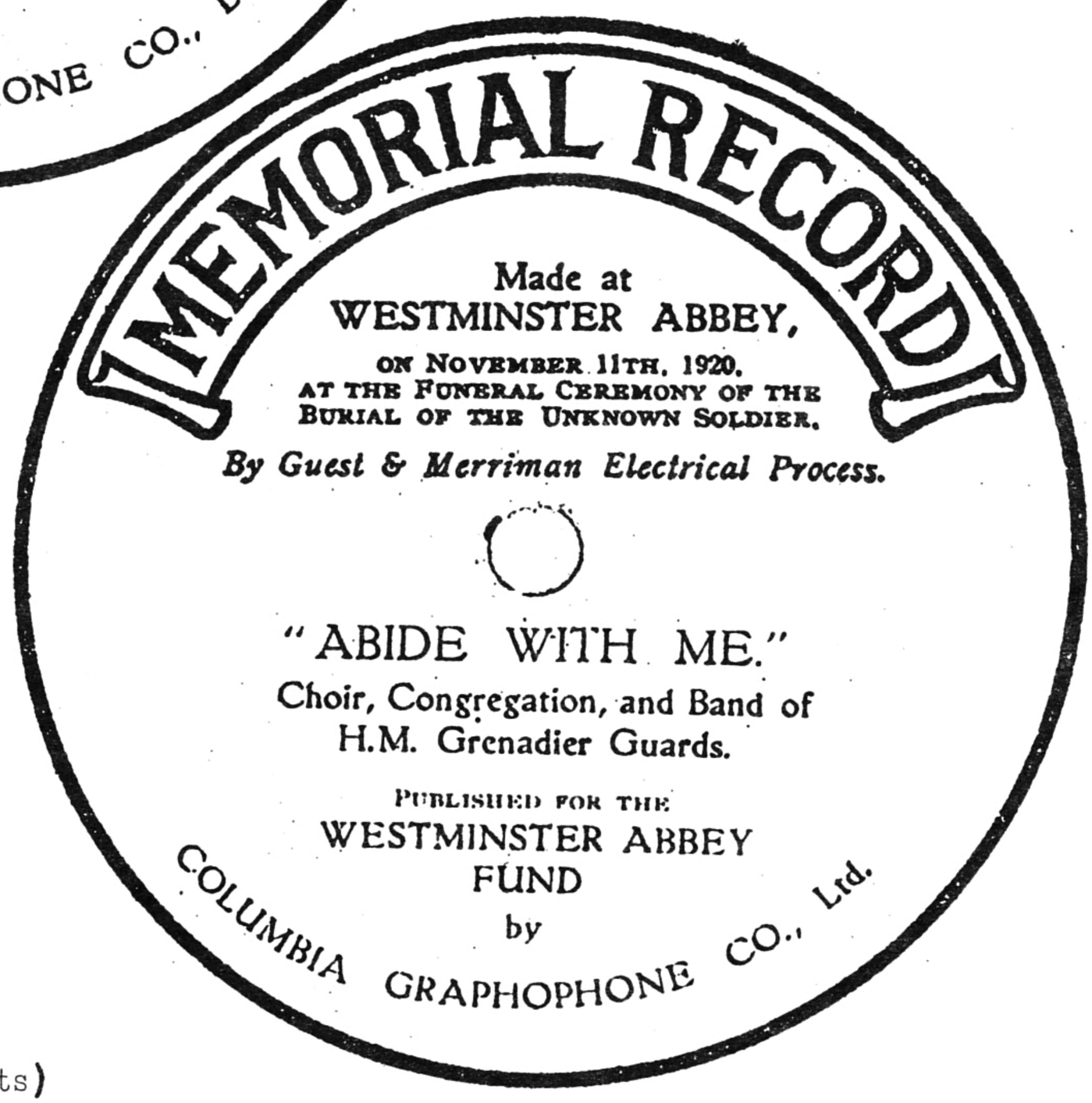
HYMN.

LEAD kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on ;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet ; I do not ask to see
The distant scene ; one step enough for me.

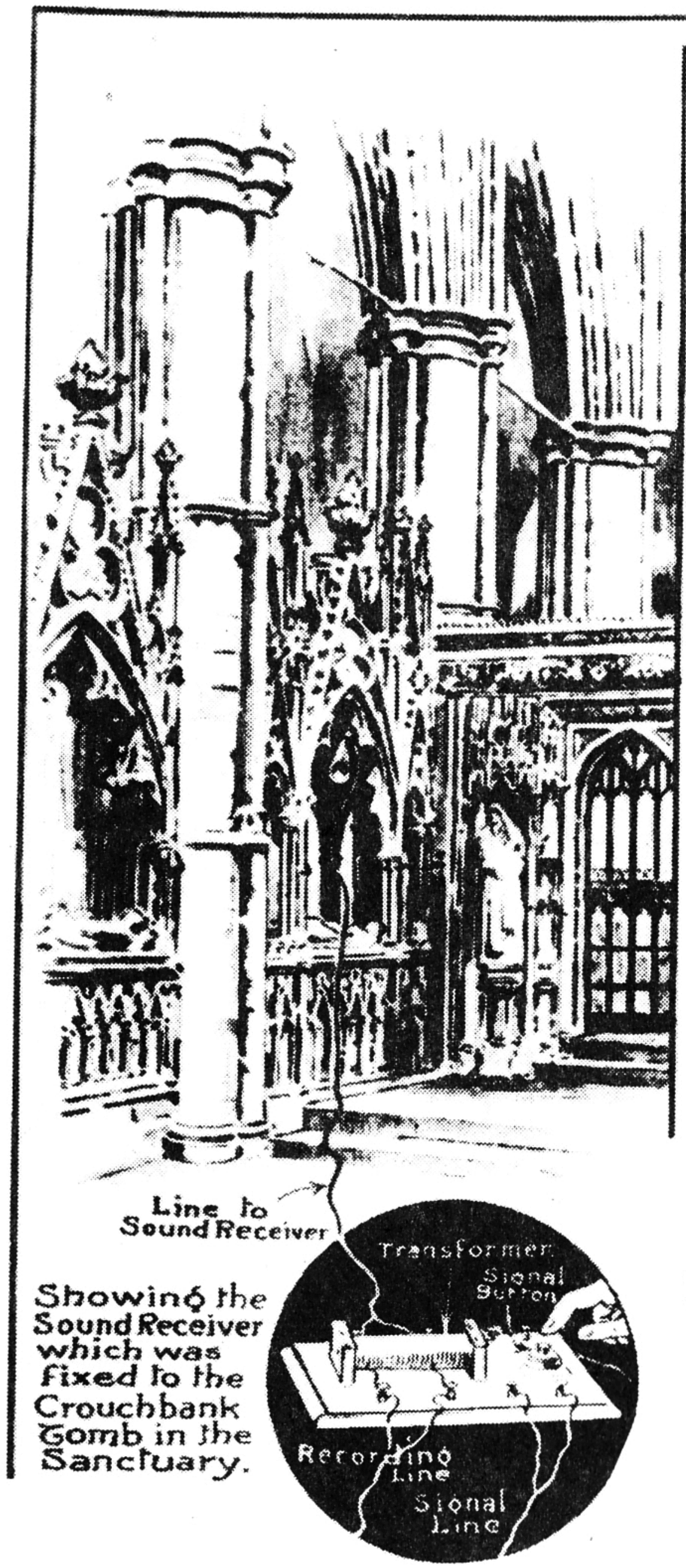
I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou
Shouldst lead me on ;
I loved to choose and see my path ; but now
Lead Thou me on.
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will : remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone ;
And with the morn those Angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile. *Amen.*

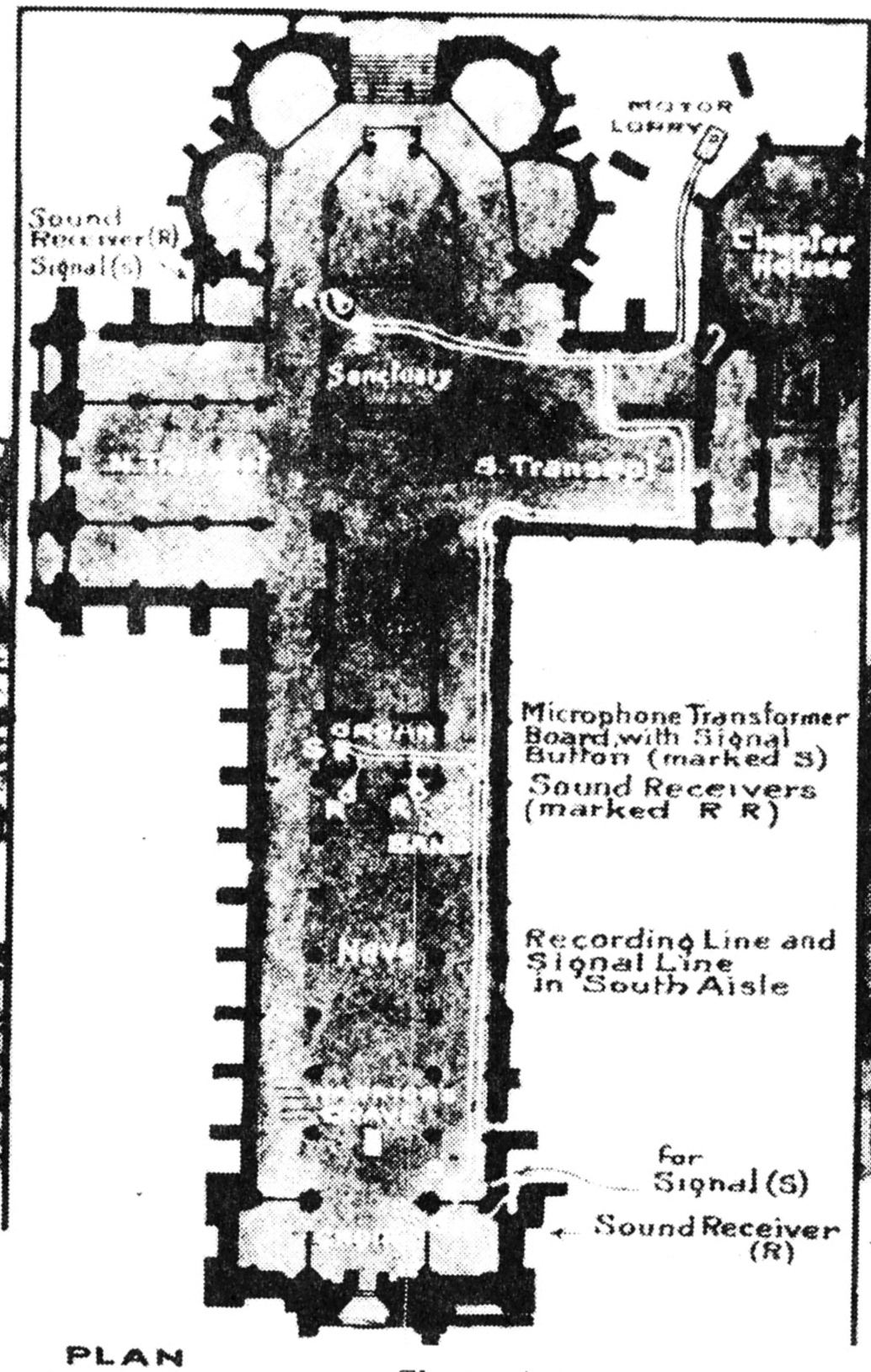
Below:
The two labels of the Guest & Merriman recording from the Service of the Burial of the Unknown Soldier, 11th. November, 1920.



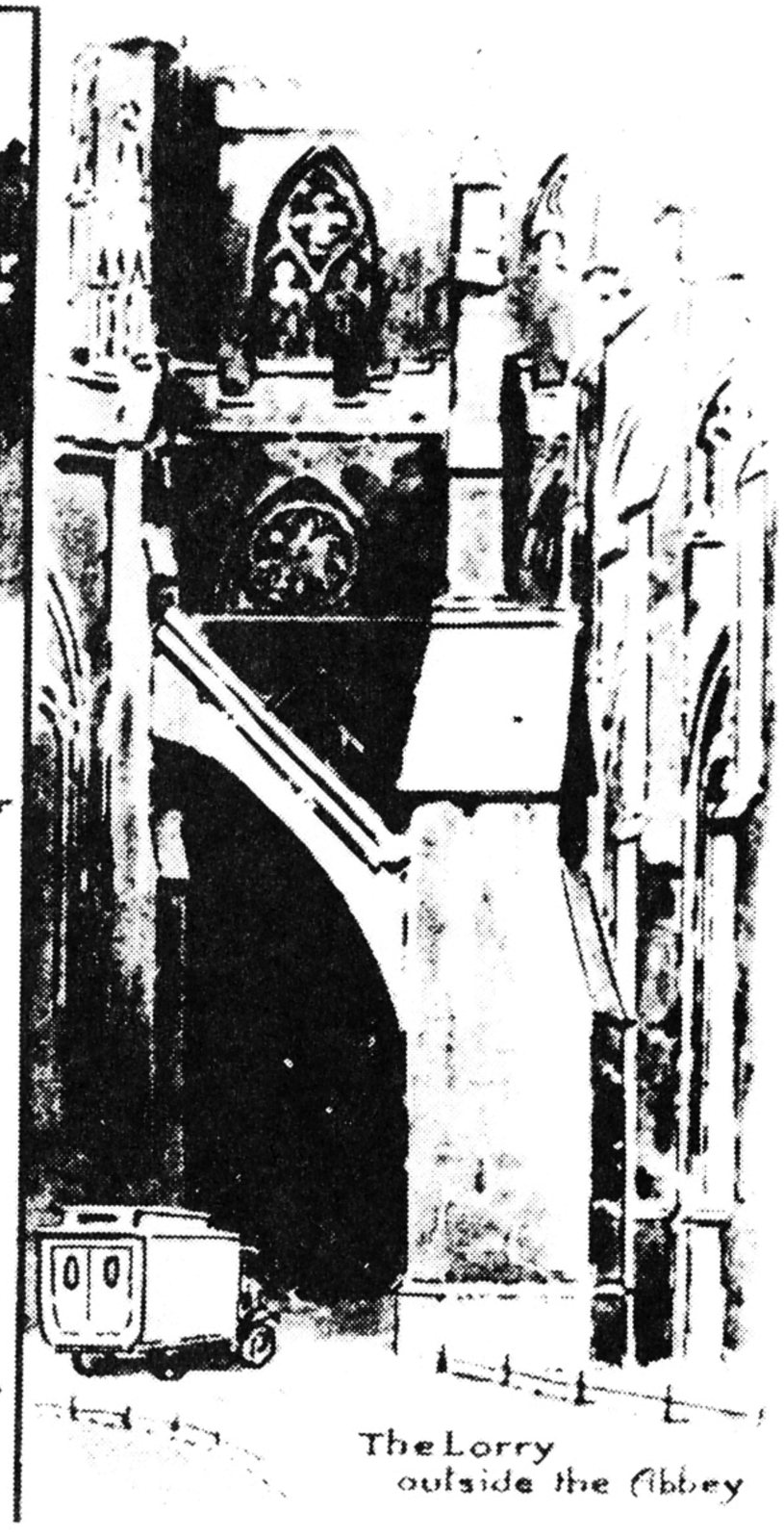
(by the courtesy of Leonard Petts)



Showing the Sound Receiver which was fixed to the Crouchbank Tomb in the Sanctuary.

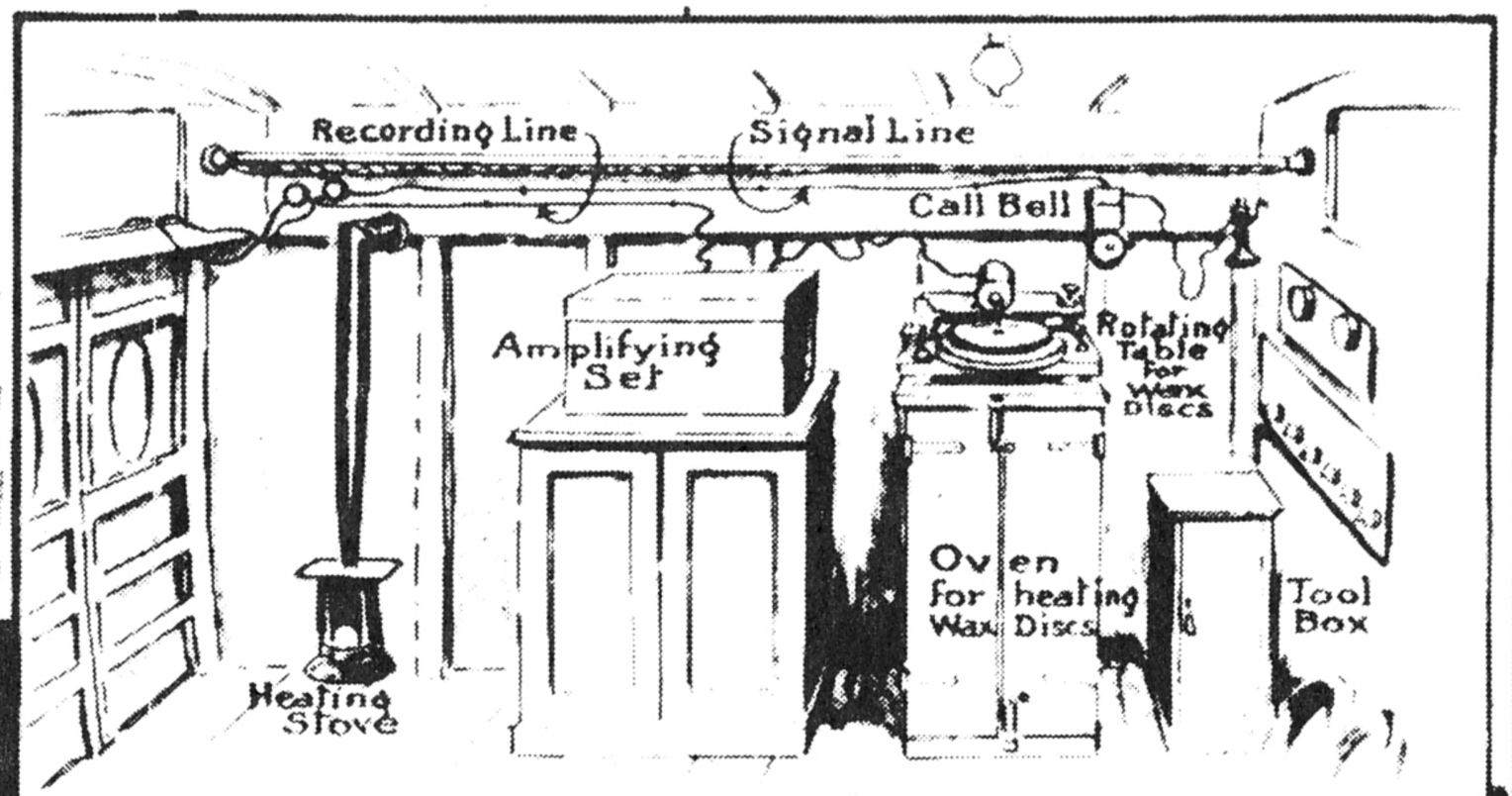


PLAN showing Lines from Receivers to Motor Lorry.

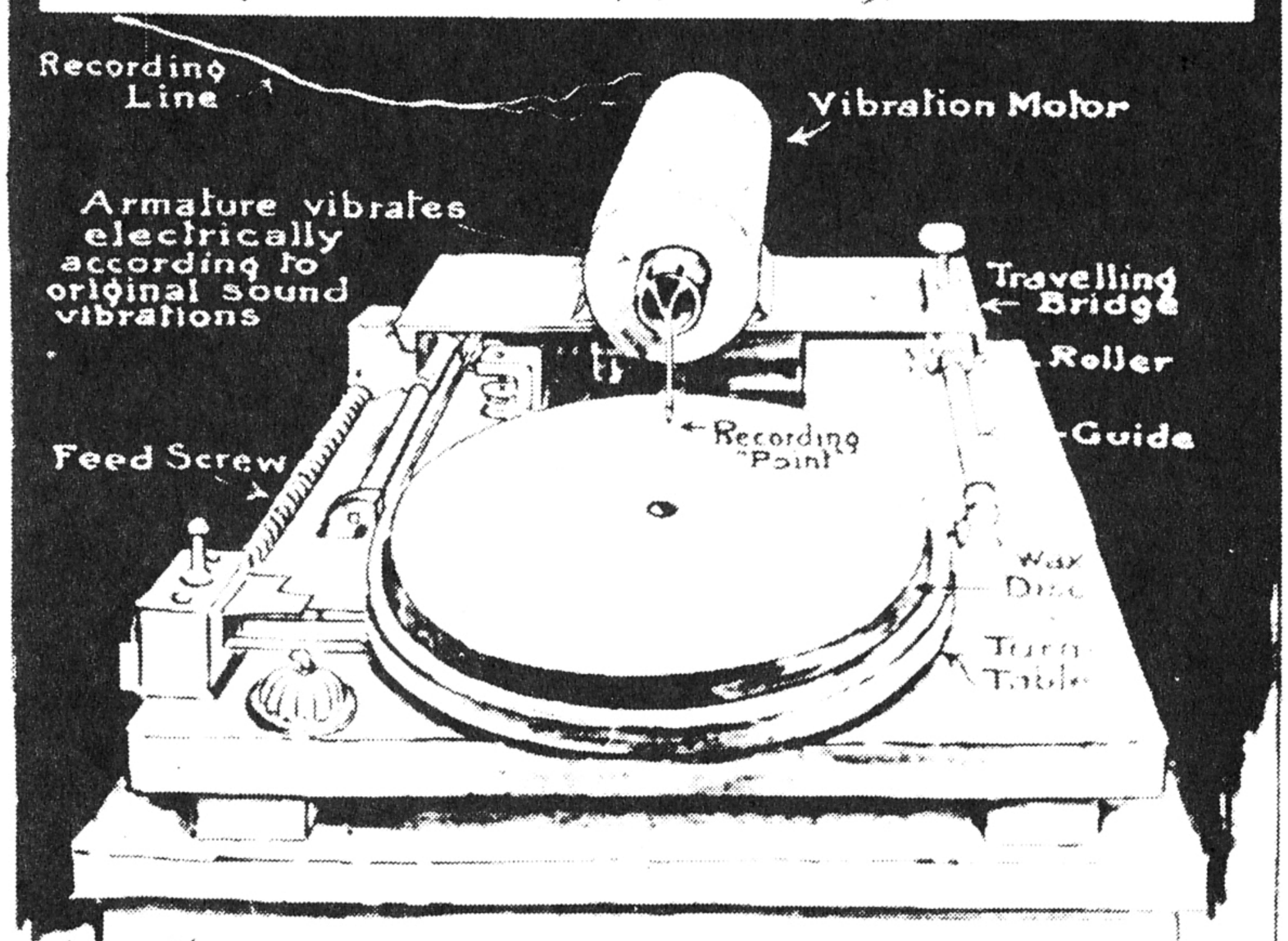


These two pages are reproduced from 'Illustrated London News' Vol. 157, 1920, and give an artist's impression of how the equipment was arranged for the recording. It is interesting to note the shape and dimension of the cutter, which is also seen on page

Showing the two Sound Receivers fixed to the Choir Screen in the Nave



Showing Interior of Workshop (Motor Lorry)



Showing enlarged view of Recording Mechanism

Monsieur Dupré frequently played especially for us, and we recorded during many of the regular services and weddings, including a wonderful Easter morning service.

We recorded a solo "Ave Maria" sung by Monsieur Dupré's sister, accompanied by him on the great organ. Also during the visit, Helen was allowed to play the great organ, being only one of eight persons, other than French citizens, who have played the great organ.

While we were living at 44. Hallswell Road, Hendon, and I was working at Mr. Guest's house in Paddington, I received a cablegram from him requesting me to bring all the recording equipment to Boston, and continue the work at the Submarine Signal Co. Within three weeks, Helen sublet our house and packed up for the move, and I closed the laboratory at Mr. Guest's house and packed the equipment in thirteen packing cases.

We sailed on the RMSP Metagama from Southampton in 1921 to New York, and Helen, Owen and I went home to Hamilton, Ontario. After a few days, I left Helen and Owen at home and set up our recording equipment at the Submarine Signal Co. in Boston.

While I worked in Boston, I lived in Cambridge. Mr. Hammond Hayes, chief engineer of the Submarine Signal Co. was very good to me. He entertained me at the Country Club where he lived, introduced me to many of his friends and took me for drives through the beautiful parks and driveways in and near Boston.

After about six months in Boston, I took the recording equipment back to Mr. Guest's house in Paddington, London, and continued the experiments for another six months. Helen and Owen remained with Mrs. Ramsay in Hamilton. I stayed with Mrs. Kingston (Aunt Nan) in Hampstead Garden Suburb.

We did much of our test recording at the Columbia recording studios in London, and the mechanical work and testing of various parts of the equipment at Mr. Guest's house. At the Columbia studio, we set up our recording equipment in a booth next to their recording booth and our microphones in the studio beside their recording horns, so as to use their music, vocal and instrumental.

It was interesting to us to see the difficulties they experienced in obtaining a record dsatisfactory for sale, even though the standards of quality in those days were below the hi - fi of today. Three records were considered good results for a vocalist after a strenuous morning and afternoon's work, and using twenty or thirty tests.

One of our difficulties was to find a satisfactory technique for engraving the was to avoid background noises caused by needle chatter. Professional recorders had largely solved this problem after years of experience, but it was kept a strict trade secret, and each recorder kept his booth locked so that the musical director or the management could not see his personal equipment. Some of these recorders were paid salaries in excess of the average professional's income, although their duties were solely the mechanical engraving of the wax. (Editor's comment= The chief recording engineer at Columbia at this period was Arthur Henry Brooks who had served in the profession, though partly with other Companies, since the beginning of the century.) The orchestra leader and musical director were responsible for the music and the approval of the final recording.

In 1922, I moved the recording and experimental equipment to New York in order to keep in close touch with the Columbia Graphophone Company there. Helen and Owen joined me there and we rented a small house in Queens, Long Island, where we set up the laboratory in an upstairs room, and used the living room as the music room.

We made considerable progress by making refinements on all the mechanical and electrical features of the recording equipment. Vocalists, pianists and a violinist came to our home to make experimental records. Among these musicians were Mr. Edwin Grass, a blind professional violinist who came from New York with his mother, and Mr. Charlie Allen, known professionally as Baldwin Alan Allan, a vocalist who brought his accompanist.

We played a joke on the accompanist. In giving the invitation, Charlie said he wanted him to meet an old school boy friend and his family from Canada, and said nothing of sound recording. On arrival, immediately after the introductions, we asked him to play the piano. The accompanist, evidently thinking we were peculiar Canadians, obliged us by playing on the piano some music he had recently composed and had never played in public. I disappeared, went upstairs and recorded the music, the microphone having been placed near the piano previously. When the record was played back, it was amusing to see his expression as he asked where the other piano was, and who was the musician!

We asked Mr. Allen to bring the quartet from his church to make records. They asked if they might bring their wives and the choir leader and his wife. They formed a big jolly party in our small house and the dinner table was extended into two rooms. As our spare bedroom was filled with recording equipment, when Charlie Allen or other friends arrived for the night, we borrowed a matress and put it on the living room floor.

As the walls and ceiling caused an objectionable echo effect on the music, Mr. Guest and I hailed passing workmen and we carried the paino into the backyard, where we recorded until midnight.

In 1923, Mr. Guest made arrangements with officials of the Columbia Graphophone Company in New York City to demonstrate our invention of electrical recording of music. He explained that, although we had not perfectly mastered the technique of engraving wax as they had done, our system showed many advantages including a wider frequency range, simplification and controlability of recording.

We installed our recording equipment in their studios in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and made records of vocal and orchestral music while they made their commercial records. We placed our microphones near their recording horns and just recorded what we picked up, not asking for any repeats as we had no control of the music. They had full control and usually had from five to fifteen repeats for one record. In order to provide sufficiently intense sound to vibrate the recroding diaphragm by their method, it was necessary for the vocalist to sing close to the horn. This often caused certain notes to blast, and to prevent this, the musical director would place his hand on the vocalist's shoulder to indicate that he must move away from the horn for such notes. When a vocalist sang specially for us, our only restriction was that he remain standing on a mat two feet square and face the microphone while with their method, a change of a few inches from the horn made a big difference.

When we went back to New York in November, 1923, we were able to demonstrate what we had claimed for our method of recording, namely, a wider frequency range which we could control electrically and thus give higher fidelity.

We found that during our absence, the control of the Columbia Graphophone Company had passed into the hands of receivers whose attitude was entirely different from the previous officials and who told us they were not interested in our invention as our records were not as saleable as theirs. We therefore decided to abandon the project and I returned to Hamilton, Ontario.

My Equipment

George Overstall

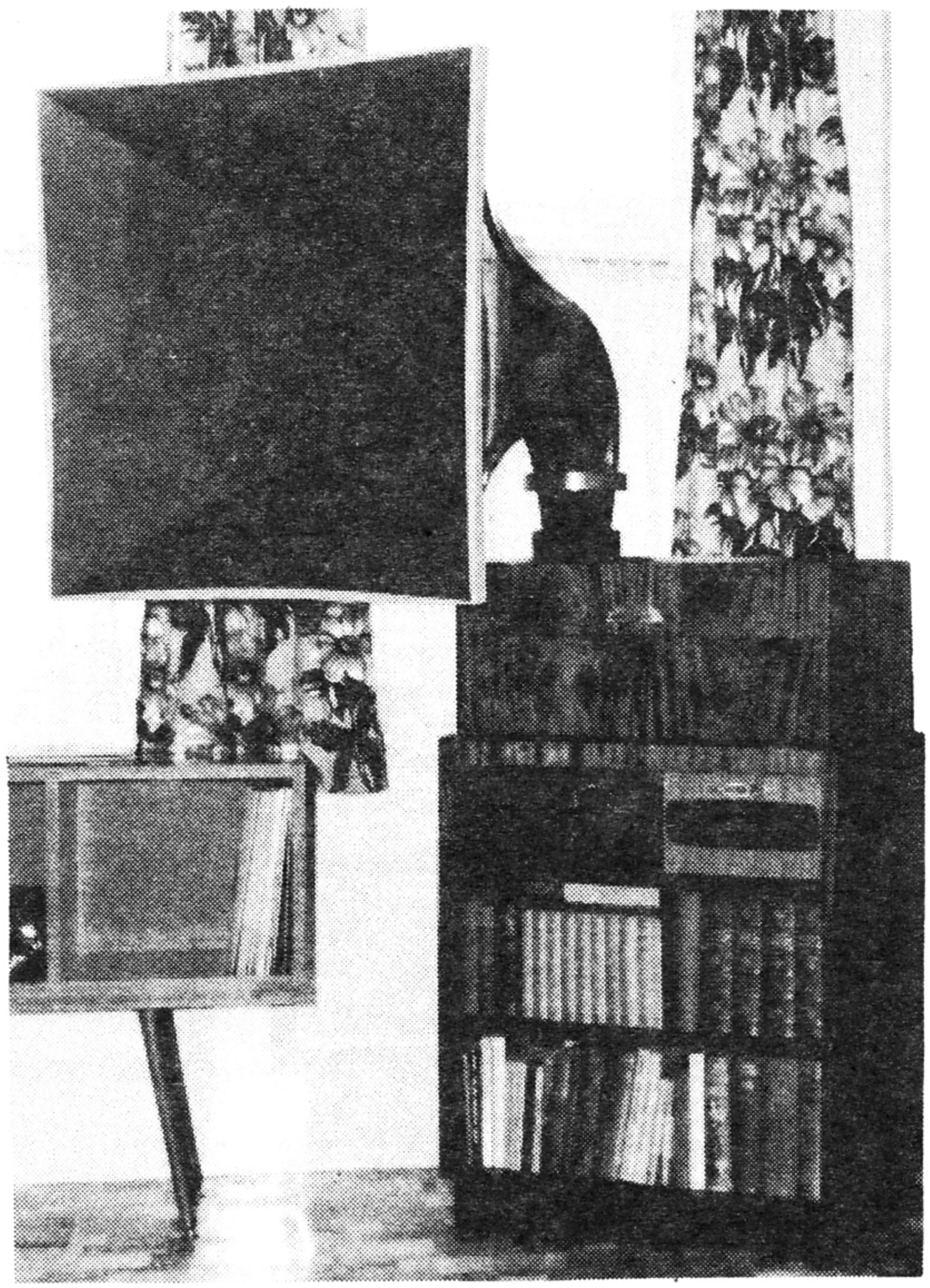


Fig.1. The complete equipment.

I designed and built a large external horn acoustic gramophone in 1969. At that time it was acoustic only and was without a pedestal stand. Since then the pedestal has been completed, and an amplifier, pick-up and speaker added to enable me to play, through the large horn, LP transcriptions of 78's and also the "Historic Masters" records from the British Institute of Recorded Sound, which I had bought not realising that they should be played with a lightweight pickup. It was a straight-forward job once the correct components had been selected.

The first amplifier tried was a miniaturised transistor but it was unsatisfactory, being somewhat unstable and the controls unreliable. Eventually a second-hand Verdik, 10 watt mono amplifier was obtained. This has inputs for radio, tape, pickup(78), pickup (LP) and microphone. Controls as follows:- selector switch: treble -10Db to + 12Db at 10 Kcs: bass -10Db to +12 Db at 20c/s: volume plus on/off switch. The circuit is basically the Mullard 610 and was favourably reported on in "The Gramophone" of May, 1958. The pickup arm finally chosen was a Lenco L69 transcription. It would fit into rather limited space better than others examined. A Sonotone ceramic turnover cartridge 3559 is now used, that giving the best results of several tried. This has a 78 sapphire and an LP diamond; only one side of the stereo output is iused. The speaker is a 2-inch diameter cone M.C. tweeter, mounted in a small enclosure with an adaptor to enable the unit to be fitted to the tone-arm in place of the acoustic soundbox (see sketch for details of enclosure). The lead from the speaker is plugged into the relevant socket in the amplifier control panel. The pickup lead, brought through the panel and plugged into the relevant socket, i.e. according to whether a 78 or LP record is on the turntable.

Figure 1 gives a general view of the completed gramophone and stand-come-bookcase. The amplifier control panel can be seen on the right hand side of the picture and immediately below the gramophone.

Figure 2 shows the Lenco 88 turntable and tonearm with acoustic soundbox in use.

Figure 3 shows the little speaker, in its enclosure, on the tonearm, in place of the soundbox and the pickup tracking across the record. I have a moving iron pickup head which

(continued on page 703)

"The Talking Machine Review"- International"
June, 1976.

Part one of

A Fonotipia Fragmentia

by

H. FRANK ANDREWS

Above is the celebrated second label of a company which was formed by two gentlemen in Milan in 1904 and which was successively bought by an English company, a German company and is now finally owned by another English Company.

INTERNATIONAL TALKING MACHINE CO.

M. B. H.

F. M. PRESCOTT. DIRECTOR.

TEMPORARY LABORATORY

BERLIN-SCHÖNEBERG

HAUPT-STRASSE 25, July 15, 1903.

To the Trade.

The controlling interest of the International Zonophone Co. having been recently purchased by the Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd, London, I have been forced to resign as Managing Director of the Company by the new interest, and I state that from this date I no longer have any connection with the management of the International Zonophone Co.

I have at once formed a new company, with more than three times the cash capital of the former Zonophone Company, and all the former engineers and principal clerks of the Zonophone Co. having resigned out of sympathy, have come with me into the new company. A new factory is in course of erection in Berlin. An entirely newly-made and large repertoire of records including the principal international languages of Europe, together with a complete and large line of disk machines, will be made and ready for sale for the Fall trade. The trade will do well to refrain from placing large orders ahead for the Fall and holiday trade, before seeing the new goods, which will be put upon the market by earliest, October.

The corporate title of the new Company is as above, and details of progress will appear from time to time in this paper.

F. M. Prescott, 25 Hauptstrasse, Schöneberg-Berlin.

October, 1903. The first public announcement from a new company which five months hence was to record and manufacture the first issues of single-sided Societa Italiana di Fonotipia disc records.

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My first research activities into the talking machine industry was an attempt to complete a full listing of the Jumbo Records which were issued in Britain from 1908 to 1920.

As most record collectors will know, the Jumbo (and Jumbola) Records were the cheapest variety of the three brands of records sold on behalf of the Fonotipia Companies, and my study of their history brought me directly to the two sister labels Odeon Records and Societa Italiana di Fonotipia, Milano.

Through my investigations I soon discovered that the generally given and accepted story surrounding the founding of the company responsible for the Societa Italiana di Fontipia records and those alleged to have founded it was quite inaccurate.

Having gathered much information over the past few years I consider that I now have sufficient material to hand to present a reasonably accurate account of the founding of Fonotipia records, and of the companies which, at different times, were responsible for the records.

This incomplete story is based almost entirely on my own researches within a radius of ten miles of my home in Neasden, north west London. I have not rewritten anything from modern authors who have commented upon Fonotipia records, nor have I been to, or had communication from such centres as Milan, Paris or Berlin, the alleged centres of Fonotipia activity in the early days of the label. Being restricted to a small area from which to carry out my research, I have been unable to investigate the story of Fonotipia as fully as I would wish, especially the events which occurred in Milan, Berlin, Barcelona, Paris and South America.

In this fragmentary history I rarely deal with the actual Fonotipia records themselves. Individual records are mentioned only where it is necessary to carry the story along. I believe that the record numbers which were allocated to Fonotipia records were numbers which from the outset formed part of the Odeon Records blocks of numbers, but which were specially reserved for the Fonotipia records.

Likewise, the matrix numbers given to the Fonotipia recordings were of the same general characteristics as those applied to the Odeon Records, excepting that the Fonotipia Records did not have letter prefixes to denote which city-recording-ledger had been used, as did the Odeon Records, but were given the denoting "Ph" prefix, the Anglo-Germanic initials for "Fonotipia". As Mr. J. R. Bennett shows in his book the work of different recording centres was denoted by number blocks, at least, this appears to be the case. The use made of "X", "XX" and "XXX" as a matrix prefix denoting the size of the Fonotipia records was also a practice of Odeon Records.

Taking the first series of Fonotipia Record numbers in Mr. Bennett's book, the 39,000 series; in the 30,000 to 40,000 range of numbers Odeon had 30,000 (Netherland?); 31,000(used); 32,000, 33,000 and 34,000, British, French and German respectively; 35,000 (used?); 36,000 (French?); 37,000 (used); 38,000 (Austrian); 39,000 Fonotipia. The 60,000 to 70,000 series :- 60,000 (Odeon); 61,000 (?); 62,000 Fonotipia; 63,000(Odeon) 64,000(Odeon); 65,000 (?); 66,000 (Odeon); 67,000 (Odeon 'Starkton'), 67,500 (Odeon) 68,000 (France and Spain) 69,000 Fonotipia. The 70,000 to 80,000 series was:- 70,000; 71,000; 72,000; 73,000 (all Odeon); 74,000 Fonotipia; 75,000; 76,000, 77,000; 78,000;79,000 and 80,000(all Odeon). In the 90,000 plus range I know only of :- 90,000 (Odeon-Far East & Dutch East Indies); 91,000(Odeon- Singapore & some Chinese); 92,000 Fonotipia; 94,000(Italy); 99,000 (Odeon). I have no positive data on post-World War I Odeon Records so cannot correlate with later Fonotipia series.

I know of only one number series applied to the 7½-inch (19 cm) discs. This was the 9,500 series of Fonotipia which are not mentioned in "Dischi Fonotipia" by John R. Bennett.

The Odeon 7½-inch records series of numbers known to me are:- 1 to 500; 1,000 onwards; 2,000; 3,000; 4,000; 6,000; 8,000; 12,000 and 13,000. I have no evidence of the 5,000; 7,000; 10,000 and 11,000 blocks having been used. There is no evidence that all of the numbers in any particular block were completely used, and some blocks may have been subdivided.

My object in enumerating the foregoing series of Odeon Records and Fonotipia records is to illustrate my contention that, from the point of view of the actual process of recording, of the production of metal masters and stampers, and the mass-production of pressed discs, the Fonotipia records, from the very first, were in fact International

Talking Machine Company m. b. H. records just as much as were the Odeon Records, and the sole distinguishing features which set the Fonotipias apart from the Odeons were the labels and the roster of record ng artistes, who, in the main, appeared only under that label. Therefore to speak of the Odeon Records coming to control Fonotipias, in later years, or vice versa, is a redundant observation. The two labels were intermixed from the first, the Societa Italiana Fonotipia being agent for the Odeon Records in Italy, which at the same time, contracted artistes for their own Fonotipia-labelled discs.

Information about Fonotipia for the years 1904 to 1914 has been relatively easy to obtain, but owing to World War I, reports and accounts of the activities of Fonotipia records outside Britain during that time and immediately afterwards have been difficult to trace.

MY PREVIOUS DATA ON FONOTIPIA

My knowledge of the affairs of Fonotipia records before I undertook my own researches into Jumbo and Fontipia records and companies comprised the following. -

"The Golden Age Recorded" by P. G. Hurst - From the chapter "A Quick Review" page 13, 2nd. edition, I had noted that the date upon which the first single-sided Fonotipia discs had been marketed was still to be determined.

Mr. Hurst, in other general comments about the recordings, does not mention the Bands repertoire, nor the Italian "Comedians" so he, like others, appears to be blissfully unaware of the 7½-inch (19 cm) diameter Fonotipias.

In Chapter 3, pages 29 to 33, Mr. Hurst comments on the three years in which others had postulated that Fonotipia records had first appeared. These were;(1) 1903, given by a "Fonotipia Operative" from a code based on catalogue numbers then in use:(2) Mr. John R. Bennett alleged he had discovered that the first recordings were made in October, 1904: (3) "Bauer", says Mr. Hurst, "gave the year as 1905." Mr. Hurst himself was backing an almost certin winner in declaring that the Fonotipia Records did not come to England until after 1903!

Accepting the dating code of the "Fonotipia Operative", Mr. Hurst then formulated a theory in which he attempted to reconcile the three years postulated. In his theory he suggests that there must have been a second, re-constructed Fonotipia company, and that it was the second company which was responsible for the introduction of the double-sided Fonotipia discs. In this, although wrong, he was very near to having it right.

The question of single-sided and double-sided discs has an aspect about which nobody who has written about the early Fonotipias has considered, which is that to have produced and marketed double-sided discs a company would either have to be in possession of Letters Patent for double-sided discs, or to have been licensed from others holding such Letters Patent. At the time when the Fonotipia records were first sold there were only two Patents extant for double-sided records in Europe. One was the property of the Deutsche Grammophon A. G. and the other was the property of the International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. (Odeon Records and machines). These two companies were in dispute at one stage over who held the exclusive rights to double-sided records.

Mr. Hurst's estimation of his own theory explaining how and when the Fonotipia records came into being was, "It looks water-tight to me". Referring to a 1904 G & T Ltd. catalogue in his chapter 5,he says that the deletions which had occurred since the issue of the 1903 catalogue were largely due to the defection of G&T artistes to Fontipia. If the

1904 catalogue was printed at the end of 1904, then Mr. Hurst may well have been correct. If it was printed before October 1904, then on Mr. John Bennett's dating, G & T artistes would have had no opportunity to defect as Fonotipias had not yet been recorded!

From Mr. John Bennett's book "Dischi Fonotipia" (the edition which contains the 1964 addenda), Mr. Hurst's Preface written in 1953 says that he remembers Fonotipias coming to England but did not recall the year. He then goes on to mention their "production" in Italy. Was he implying that Italy was the place of production of the single-sided records? No mention was made of where the pressing plant could have been located.

Mr. Bennett opens his "Introduction" observing that half a century had elapsed since the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia, Milano had been created by the merchant banker Baron d'Erlanger. Also written in 1953, this, taken literally, would place the foundation of Fonotipia back in 1903 once more, but I am sure that a literal meaning was not intended (but the reference to the Baron is absolutely incorrect.) Coming to 1922, Mr. Bennett says that "Odeon, by this time, had a firm grip on Fonotipia".

In his "Introduction" to his "Supplement", Mr. Bennett says that 1905 was the year in which Fonotipias came to England, but the earliest reference which he himself has seen was dated 1st. June, 1906.

A remark is made at his point upon Messrs. Ch. and J. Ullmann calling themselves "The Odeon Company", which Mr. Bennett for some obscure reason calls "prophetic". The Ullmanns were the agents for Odeon Records in Britain, France, Belgium, Spain and Portugal and were also large shareholders in the "International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H." of Berlin, the recorders and pressers of "Odeon Records". The Ullmanns had been the "Odeon Company in Britain from the very first issue of Odeon Records in February, 1904.

As readers of my history of the Sterling Record (cylinders) will know, (available from The Talking Machine Review, combined with S. H. Carter's complete listing), the "Odeon Company" in Britain transferred their agency to the makers of the Sterling Record, while the Ullmanns retained their agency for Odeon and Fonotipia in France & other countries listed above. With the publication of the supplement to the original "Dischi Fonotipia", the dating of Fonotipia discs had become connected with their matrix numbers, and not with their catalogue numbers as hitherto, and this method has apparently solved the problem of recording dates, commencing with October, 1904, it is alleged.

In "From Tinfoil to Stereo", after mentioning that Odeon Records were first produced in 1904, it is claimed that the manufacturers established branches in other countries, mentioning only France specifically. But, in Italy, "Odeon" had an affiliated company known as the "Societa Italiana di Fonotipia."

"The Fabulous Phonograph" has Fonotipia founded in the latter part of 1904, and then continues to give the usual, but inaccurate, account of how the company was formed. The myth is perpetuated that the label was devoted only to recordings by first class opera singers and a few first class instrumentalists. Again there is no mention of band repertoire, nor any reference to the small 19-centimetre discs. Dealing with the year 1907, the Odeon and Fonotipia firms are implied to be separate entities, this in reference to negotiations of American Columbia for the rights to issue some of the repertoire from these labels in U. S.A. Dealing with the "Carl Lindström A. G." company, this book says that Lindström acquired the Odeon Company of Berlin and the Fonotipia Company of Italy implying them to be separate comapnies.

GRAND OPERA ARTISTES

— ON —

DOUBLE-SIDED RECORDS.

No Record genuine without the Artiste's signature impressed in the disc and signed on the label.

EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF EVERY ARTISTE.

Amongst same are the following:

Maria Barrientos.	**Enzo Leliva.**	**Elisa Petri.**
Alessandro Bonci.	**Oreste Luppi.**	**Giannina Russ.**
Francesco Maria Bonini	**Victor Maurel.**	**Mario Sammarco.**
Guiseppe De Luca.	**Guiseppe Pacini.**	**Riccardo Stracciari.**
Edoardo Garbin.	**Regina Pacini.**	**Francesco Vignas.**
Jan Kubelik.	**Armida Parsi-Pettinella.**	**Giovanni Zenatello.**

DUETS, TERZETS AND QUARTETTES BY

A. Stehle, E. Garbin, De Bohuss, E. Leliva, O. Luppi, A. E. Petri, G. Russ, L. Longobardi, G. Pacini, Camporelli, M. Sammarco, &c., &c., some with chorus of the Scala Theatre, Milan.

All prominent Dealers are invited to write us with respect to appointing Sole Agencies.

Sole Agents for **THE FONOTIPIA,**

CH. & J. ULLMANN (THE "ODEON" CO.)

14, HAMSELL STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Boris Semeonoff, in his "Record Collecting", remarks that a cheaper and domestic equivalent of Fonotipia discs were the Odeon Records.

The foregoing is the total of information which I had acquired about Fonotipia before I began my own enquiries. The only point which seemed to be established was that the first Fonotipia discs were recorded in October, 1904, although I cannot find how this was discovered, or if it was so. It was probably true that the discs came to Britain in 1905 and they were double-sided. The connection with Odeon Records was a confused and contradictory mess. If 1903 for the first Fonotipias should be confirmed as correct they would pre-date the Odeon Records!

MY OWN STORY OF THE FOUNDATION OF FONOTIPIA

In this account I shall not be dealing with the artistes who recorded for the Fonotipia label, so if your only interest in records is "recorded art" what follows is not for you, but if you are interested in records here is something of the history of those companies which founded and continued the production of the discs labelled "Societa Italiana di Fonotipia, Milano."

PRE - FONOTIPIA

The history of talking machines, recordings, and the persons and companies that were responsible for their production I often liken to a very large triangularly shaped jig-saw puzzle. The piece forming the apex of the puzzle is now ninety-nine years old, and it is so old I do believe the name upon it has become almost obliterated with time. I can make out the date 1877 - and the beginning of a name, viz: "T. A. Ed...?" But no, I cannot make out the rest, - I wonder who that could have been?

Looking down the puzzle (which is in no way complete) as it broadens out towards its long base, there comes a gap, and I have found a piece that fits therein. It is the beginning of the Fonotipia story.

Immediately above, and forming the gap, are two pieces into which Fonotipia must fit. One of those pieces is marked the "International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H, Berlin/ Odeon Records", and the adjoining piece is marked "The Gramophone Company (Italy), Limited." Above these two pieces, respectively, are pieces marked, "The International Zonophone Company, New York & Berlin/Zonophone Records", and "The Gramophone Company, Limited". To appreciate how Fonotipia relates to these four pieces we will tackle the uppermost pieces first.

The International Zonophone Company was formed in 1901, with Frederick Marion Prescott as Managing Director of the Berlin end of the Business..... Prescott, when in New York in 1898, had been an exporter of Edison goods to all parts of the world. He lost this Agency while on a visit to Europe and Britain, allegedly through the connivance of his partner Stevens. On his return to the U. S. A. he found himself on the "Suspended List" of Edison's National Phonograph Comapny.

He next became Export Agent for the National Gramophone Company/Corporation, itself the Sole Sales Agents company for the Gramophones and "E. Berliner's Gramophone" discs of the Berliner Gramophone Company within the United States and Canada. Prescott sent many of the machines, parts and records to the recently-established Gramophone Company in England.

Some of these Gramophones had been sold in the U. S. A. under the name of "Zon-O-phone".

Soon after Prescott began exporting the Gramophone, his supplier, the National Gramophone Corporation, became estranged from the Berliner Gramophone Company, and began marketing a new line of Zon-O-phone machines, manufactured by an associated company which they had founded. Prescott, no longer receiving Gramophones, became sole export agent for the new line of Zonophones thus continuing his association with the National Gramophone Corporation of the U. S. A. The new Zonophone was a success in Europe, especially in Germany, and it was decided that an International Zonophone Company should be formed, with a disc pressing plant in Germany which would record and press discs for the different countries of Europe having both a national and international repertoire, and at the same time, import Zonophone machines from America together with a suitable selection of recorded discs from the American repertoire on Zon-O-phone Records.

This was duly carried into effect and the International Zonophone Company of New York and Berlin was established as the first competitive disc business to the Gramophone Company Limited & its "Sister Companies", whose own pressing plant was at Hannover in Germany.

The relationships between these two companies were strained at the outset because not only had Prescott changed from being the "Man in New York" for the Gramophone Company to being Managing Director of the "Opposition", but was also a major shareholder of the new company in Berlin, the very people who, in the U. S. A., had brought Emil Berliner's business in U. S. A. to a virtual standstill. Emil Berliner and his brother Joseph were substantial stockholders in the Gramophone Company Limited and its "Sister Company" Deutsche Grammophon A. G. who were now being challenged in Europe.

After much harrassment, litigation, and threats of litigation, the majority shareholding in the International Zonophone Company sold its stock to the Gramophone and Typewriter, Ltd.* in the summer of 1903. (*The newly reconstructed Gramophone Company,Ltd.) Frederick Prescott, himself a substantial shareholder in his International Zonophone Co., resigned his position as Managing Director of International Zonophone, now controlled by "G & T Limited", taking many of his staff with him to form the International Talking Machine Company m. b. H. of Berlin, having a new factory built at Weissensee for the manufacture of Odeon Records. Even when these came on the market, Prescott was still a substantial shareholder in the International Zonophone Company of Berlin for it was not until some time later that the Gramophone & Typewriter Limited acquired his shares.

Messrs. Charles et Jacques Ullmann, who had been his Zonophone Agents, continued as his Odeon Agents, but the Anglo Italian Commerce Company of Milan did not become an Agency for Odeon.

We now pass from the "Odeon" company to the Gramophone Company (Italy) Limited, and the Gramophone and Typewriter, Limited.

It was the Gramophone Company,Limited, of Maiden Lane, London W.C. which set up and formed the Gramophone Company (Italy) Limited, whose base for practical operations was Milano, Italy, but whose registered office was with the founding company at Maiden Lane, London.

The Gramophone Company (Italy) Limited, Registered no.63639, was incorporated on 21st. September, 1899, with a nominal capital of £50,ooo in £1 shares. Under an Agreement signed nine days later, 30th. Septamber, between, on the first part, Alfred Michaelis, described as a merchant of Milan, Italy, William Michaelis, merchant of Brighton, Sussex, England and John Thomas Stevens, a builder of Southall, Middlesex, England; on the second part by the Gramophone Company,Limited, and on the third part by the Gramophone Company (Italy) Limited, the Italian company acquired some patentsrights of the Gramophone Company for the Kingdom of Italy and rightd to trade there in the products of the Gramophone Company, Limited.

Alfred Michaelis, William Michaelis and John T. Stevens were appointed as co-directors for a term of three years, A. Michaelis being the Manager in Milan. Letters Patent assigned to their company was No.25728 of 1898, due for expiry in 1903. The Gramophone Company, Limited, subscribed £500 towards the working capital of the Italian company and were majority shareholders in the company with 26,000 paid up shares. John Thomas Stavens agreed to subscribe £2,000 towards the working capital and he received 15, 166 fully paid up shares. The brothers Michaelis received 4,417 shares each, as fully paid up. E. Trevor Williams and W. Barry Owen of the parent company were appointed to the Board, of which the composition remained unchanged a year later. Williams and Owen held, in their own names, the stockholding of The Gramophone Co.,Ltd. in the Italian company. By December, 1902, the three- co-managers were no longer mentioned as being on the Board, but Alfred Michaelis was still in the employ of the Gramophone Company (Italy) Limited. By this time the Gramophone Company Limited had sold its business to a new company, the Gramophone and Typewriter Limited which had been formed by the directors of the former company. The Gramophone Company (Italy) Limited remained in existence until 17th. September, 1958.

Returning to Alfred Michaelis.... He and the Gramophone Company (Italy) Limited parted company in 1904 when he was dismissed, the circumstance of which revolved around a private activity of his meeting with the disapproval of Head Office at Maiden Lane, London. Michaelis himself, according to others who knew him at that time, felt that he had been unjustly treated by the Gramophone Companies and it was this feeling of bitterness which led him to form a new recording company in Milan with which he hoped to ruin the Gramophone Company (Italy) Limited, the company which he had helped to establish. Michaelis was still in the employ of the Gramophone Company (Italy) in June, 1904. While I am unable to divulge my source, I have seen documents written at the time whose content is irrefutable so a fuller account of the 'Michaelis Affair' will no doubt be made public at a leter date.

FONTIPIA FOUNDED

From my own researches, the date of October, 1904, given by John R.Bennett as the month in which the first Fonotipia records were recorded could be correct. Mr. Bennett is in no doubt but I have no knowledge of his eveidence for this.

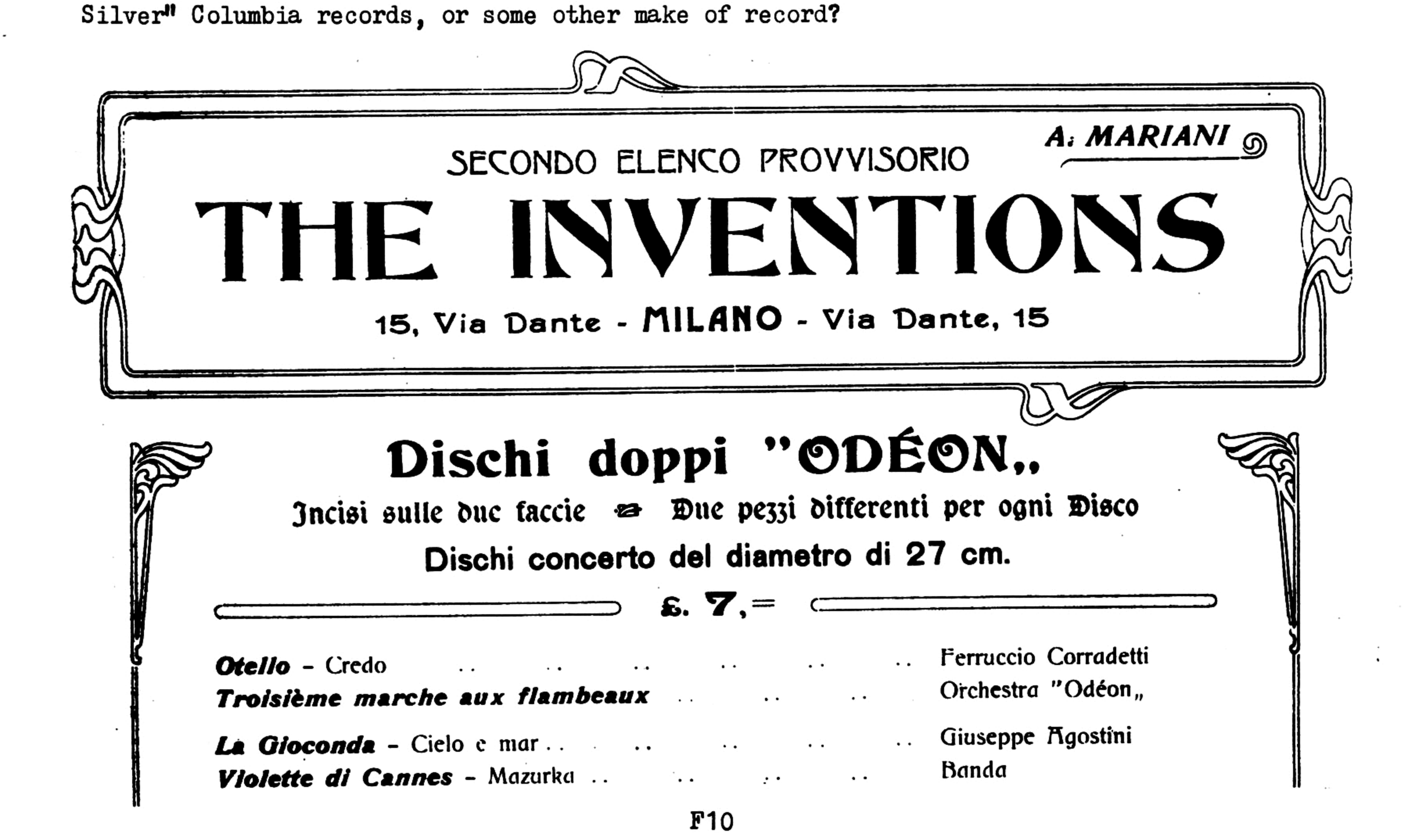
Between June and August, 1904, The Gramophone Company (Italy),Ltd. and its General Manager, Alfred Michaelis, parted company.

In August, in Milan, it was known that Michaelis, who was obviously well-acquainted with many operatic artistes, had the intention of forming a disc records business in opposition to the company with which he had then been recently associated.

On 12th. October, 1904, Michaelis entered into an aggreement with an engineer named Dino Foa, whereby 25% of the surplus profits of the business of manufacturers and dealers in disc records and other items associated with the reproduction of sound, and of music publishers, which they owned in partnership, was payable to them. In my opinion this aggreement must be taken as the founding of the Fonotipia records enterprise.

By agreement of 6th. January, 1905, the name of their partnership was registered under the Italian law as the "Societa Italiana di Fonotipia, in Accomandita", Milano. When in 1906, sixteen months later, this business was sold to a newly incorporated English joint stock company styled "Fonotipia Limited", the name of the Milan company was given as "Societa Italiana di Fonotipia in Accomandita (Michaelis, Foa & Company), Milano", thus indicating that the original business was then no longer a partnership, but that others had become financially or commercially interested therein.

In January,1905, also in Milan, a list of "Dischi doppi "Odeon" (double-sided Odeon Records) was issued by a shop at 15, Via Dante, Milan, styled "The Inventions", the manager of which appears to have been Signor Mariani. The shop was said to have belonged to Alfred Michaelis. This list of Odeon Records, which was the "Secondo Elenco Provvisorio" of "The Inventions" shop, was described by the Gramophone Co. (Italy) Ltd. as the first list of Odeon Records in Italy. One wonders what was included on the "Primo Elenco Provvisorio". If it was not an earlier list of Odeons, would it have been "Black and Silver" Columbia records, or some other make of record?



As far as I am aware, Italy was without an agency for Odeon Records until this time, for Prescott's former Italian Zonophone Agency, the Anglo-Italian Commerce Company, became associated with the International Zonophone Company after its acquisition by the Gramophone and Typewriter Limited. In most other countries the former Zonophone Agencies had kept their allegience to Prescott by becoming Agents for the Odeon Records.

Everything points to the partnership of Michaelis and Foa being the first Italian Agency for Prescott's International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. of Berlin, with its Odeon Records, as well as being the "Societa Italiana di Fonotipia". As Mr. Bennett says recording began in 1904 for Fonotipia, the engineers of the International Talking Machine Company must have been in Milan during that month, not only recording Michaelis's contracted artistes but also recording artistes for their own Odeon label, artistes who, if Michaelis and Foa were indeed the Italian Agents for Odeon Records, as is almost certain, the partnership would have engaged to record for the German-based Comapny.

Significantly, it is known that Elvino Ventura, who was included in the "first" Italian Odeon list, is also the seventeenth record listed in Bennett's "Dischi Fonotipia". Other artistes common to both the first Odeon list in Italy and the first issues of Fonotipia were Corradetti and Luppi.

The "Societa Italiana di Fonotipia" was at No.4. Via Dante, "The Inventions" at No.15 and the"Anglo-Italian Commerce Company" was at No. 6.

The first list of Italian Odeon Records provided by "The Inventions" consisted of twelve double-sided records of the 19 cm. (7½ inch) diameter size and sixteen of the 27 cm. (10¾ inch) size, the latter size being that used for the new single-sided Fonotipia discs. There were seven Italian opare singers included on both sizes, plus the Chorus of La Scala Theatre, Milan. Some recordings were not by Italians, as there were two sides, recorded in London by Charlie Rogers (Carlos Rogers) the youthful bajoist.

A striking feature of the first Italian Odeon Records was that they carried a "key-note" device, a recognised trade mark of the Gramophone Company (Italy) Ltd. (the discs were described as Fonotipias, so perhaps they also carried the "Societa Italiana Fonotipia, Milano" legend around the top of the top of the label). The "key-note" trade mark of the Gramophone Company depicted the five lined music stave, with the treble clef symbol and the word "Gramophone". The Gramophone Company (Italy) Ltd. knew their trade mark was being infringed by the "key-note" device of Michaelis, but they were in trouble themselves concerning the validity of their Letters Patent. Apparently they were delaying proceedings against Michaelis until they were sure of a favourable decision on their Patent.

Has any collector one of the early Odeon/Fonotipia records bearing a label with the Michaelis "key-note" device?

I am unfamiliar with the early labels of Odeon records which were made for the Italian market, but I do have a brown-and-gold labelled Italian Odeon, which label equates with the first Odeon labels as issued in Britain, except for the fact that the style "International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. around the upper limits of the label was replaced by "Societa Italiana di Fonotipia, Milano." Was this Disco Odeon label the first "legitimate" Odeon label in Italy?

Two days after Kenneth Muir, the new manager of the Gramophone Company (Italy) Ltd.,

TRADE MARK.

WARNING.

Double-Sided Records.

OUR Enormous Success in Double-Sided Disc Records has led to two or three firms infringing the patents of Mr. A. N. Petit, covering this invention, and of which we are the sole licensees for the entire world.

We beg to inform the Trade and the Public that we control patents covering the exclusive right of pressed homogeneous Double-Sided Disc Records in the following countries:

Great Britain, 1294. United States of America, 749092. Belgium, 155104. Germany, D.R.G.M. 148105. Austria, 11365. Canada, 75705. Spain, 27399. Italy, 40/18940. Brazil, 3465.

Suits for infringement of the above patents have already been brought in Germany, Austria, and the United States, and further suits will be promptly brought in any other countries where our patents might be infringed.

We warn the Trade and Public against dealing in, handling or using infringing Double-Sided Disc Records on which they will ultimately have to pay large damages. The only legitimate Double-Sided Disc Records bear our patent numbers and our "ODEON" trade mark as above.

Catalogue and List of Agents furnished upon application.

INTERNATIONAL TALKING MACHINE CO.,
Lehderstrasse 24, Weissensee,
BERLIN, GERMANY.

May, 1905. The International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. held a patent for double-sided discs in Italy at the time when Michaelis, Foa & Giordano's Societa Italiana di Fonotipia was providing its single-sided Fonotipia discs for European retailers, and selling double-sided Odeons in Italy. Opposite: an advertisement for single-sided Fonotipia records offered by the German agents who held patents for double-sided Odeon Records.

Alessandro Bonci

hat sich endlich entschlossen, für Sprechapparate zu singen, und zwar kontraktlich ausschliesslich für die

Società Italiana di Fonotipia in Mailand

(Italienische Gesellschaft für Kunst-Tondruck).

Jede dieser Platten ist ein wahres Juwel für den Grammophonbesitzer, künstlerisch und technisch das denkbar Vollendetste. Jede einzelne Aufnahme, die im Handel erscheint, ist von dem Künstler selbst geprüft und mit eigener Unterschrift versehen.

Der Preis der Bonci-Platten beträgt für
Platten mit 27 Zentimeter Durchm. Mk. 12,— per Stück
Platten mit 35 Zentimeter Durchm. Mk. 20,— per Stück

Das bis heute erschienene Repertoire ist folgendes:

Bonci-Platten 27 Zentimeter Durchmesser:

Nr. 39079. **Mignon.** Adio Mignon, fa core.
Nr. 39080. **Mefistofele.** Giunto sul passo estremo.
Nr. 39081. **Rigoletto.** La donna è mobile.
Nr. 39082. Tosca. Recondite armonie.
Nr. 39084. I Puritani. A te o cara.
Nr. 39128. Caro mio ben. (Giordani.) Romanza.
Nr. 39083. Elisio d'Amore. Una furtiva lagrima.
Nr. 39127. Spiagge Amate. Elena e Paride (Gluck).
Nr. 39129. Il Flanto Magico. Ahl cara immagine.
Nr. 39111. La Favorita. Una vergin un angiol.

Bonci-Platten 35 Zentimeter Durchmesser:

Nr. 69007. Mignon. Ah non credivi tu.
Nr. 69008. Don Giovanni. Dalla sua pace.

Weitere Aufnahmen folgen.

Zu beziehen durch die:

International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H.

BERLIN—NEU-WEISSENSEE, Lehder-Str. 24.

had informed the London office about the new Odeon Records in Italy, Alfred Michaelis and Dino Foa entered an agreement (on 15th. January, 1905) with the composer and conductor Umberto Giordano, under which he was to receive a percentage of the surplus net profits of the Fonotipia enterprise. Perhaps it is justifiable to claim that Giordano's engagement as Musical Advisor and Director for the Fonotipia recordings commenced from this date.

THE FIRST FONOTIPIA LIST

In the latter part of March, 1905, the Gramophone Company in London was informed from its Italian associate of the first list of eleven single-sided discs from the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia. It was pointed out that these did not bear the "key-note" device on their labels as had the earlier Disco Odeons, which had been described as "Fonotipia" records, but which they could not have been as they had been double-sided discs. One wonders why Michaelis used the "key note" device on the first Odeon/Fonotipia records, if that is what they were.

My speculation is that in using a mark well-known to be that of the Gramophone Company, Michaelis was hoping that his Fonotipia enterprise would be accepted as having a connection or continuity with the company of which he had formerly been the manager. This acceptance would help his alleged campaign to ruin the Gramophone Company (Italy) Ltd., as would the pressing of discs with such labels by the International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. which was already in dispute withh the Gramophone & Typewriter Limited and its Sister Companies, in a number of countries over the question of double-sided records and other matters (see "Warning" notice on a previous page).

A piece of enlightening information came from Elvino Ventura (who had formerly made records for the Gramophone Company) who made records for Michaelis under the impression that they would be issued only under the Fonotipia label, and was surprised that some were issued under the Disco Odeon label, suggesting most strongly, even if there were no other evidence, that Michaelis and/or his Societ Italiana di Fontipia were indeed the Odeon Agents in Italy.

Conversely, we know that the International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. of Weissensee was the German Agency for the Fonotipia discs, as exemplified by the advertisement in the Phonographische Zeitschrift on 26th. July, 1905. This listed ten 27 cm. (10¾ inch) discs and two 35cm (13¾ inch) discs of Alessandro Bonci priced at 10 and 12 marks respectively. This was the first advertisement for Fonotipia recordings published in that periodical.

On 12th. April, 1905, the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia entered into an agreement with G. Ricordi and Co. the Italian music publishers, the content of which is unknown to me.

In September, Michaelis asked for a special Extraordinary Meeting of the International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. in Germany, which took place on 27th. September at 24. Lehderstrasse, Weissensee, Berlin. Alfred Michaelis who requested the meeting to "discuss business affairs" was described at the time as "Merchant, personally liable partner of the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia in Accomandita of Milan." Unfortunately the subject matter of the discussions was not revealed in the document reporting the meeting, which was signed on 5th. October, 1905, by, among others, Frederick M. Prescott; Emil Rink, manager of "Odeon" in Britain; Alfred Michaelis and Jacques Ullmann of Paris.

It was known to the Gramophone Company (Italy) Ltd. as early as August, 1905, that Michaelis had been contemplating bringing on to the market, double-sided Fonotipia records, but whatever was discussed at the special meeting in Weissensee in September it is a fact that when the Fonotipia records were advertised in Britain in November, 1905, only double-sided records were offered for sale.

It can therefore be deduced that excepting the later discs of 35 cm (13¾ inches) diameter which were issued only as single-sided discs, all single-sided records of Fonotipia had been discontinued by November, 1905.

FONOTIPIA RECORDS ARRIVE IN BRITAIN

The first announcement that the Fonotipia records were coming to the British market appeared in October, 1905, but it was surprising for the readers of the "Daily Mail" newspaper of 29th. November, 1905, to see a front page advertisement proclaiming the arrival. (See the following page)

The Fonotipia enterprise was in its fourteenth month and despite "popular legend", the Barons d'Erlanger had yet to show an interest in them.

Up to this time, according to John R. Bennett's matrices dating, the originators of Fonotipia had been responsible for the 360 or so sides which had been recorded since October, 1904, an everage of approximately 28 recordings per month for 13 months for the exclusive use of Fonotipia. (Other recordings would have been made in Italy for the Disco Odeon label.)

At this point I would like to say that P. G. Hurst's references to Mr. Bennett placing Fonotipias in 1904, and Mr. Bauer placing them in 1905, can be taken as practically correct on the part of both gentlemen, provided one distinguishes between recording and releasing. The "Operatives Code" is invalid and the year 1903 need not be investigated further, (which could be a reference to Odeon Records).

Circumstantial evidence suggests that the September meeting of the International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. in Berlin discussed "foreign" Agencies, for the Fonotipia discs soon came to the "Odeon Disc Record Company" in London, which was one of the trading names of Messrs. Ch & J. Ullmann, who, in October, 1905, were reported in "The Phono Trader" as having been appointed sole representatives in Britain for the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia, Milan, "which company is connected with the International Talking Machine Co. (Odeons) of Berlin."

"The records will bear the autographed signature of the exclusive artistes engaged. The records will be on sale in November at ten shillings and twelve shillings for double-sided discs. Kubelik records on a Stradivarius which cost 30,000 francs."

The first three factors appointed for the Fonotipia Records in Britain were Messrs. Barnett Samuel & Sons, Ltd., established since the 1830's; Messrs.John G. Murdoch & Co.,Ltd., who had first been incorporated in March, 1883; and Messrs. The New Polyphon Supply Company, Ltd.

In the first advertisement for the new Fonotipia discs, recordings by Kubelik and Jean de Reske were promised but the latter was omitted from Messrs. Ullmann's November, 1905, advertisement. A Grand Opera record of 13¾ inches diameter had been promised in the October advertisement. The December advertisement showed the prices as sixteen shillings and £1 each. (The 'standard' size disc of 10¾ inches was titled 'concert' for Odeon Records.)

To Introduce our FIRST ISSUE of

FONOTIPIA

DOUBLE-SIDED DISC RECORDS

We Will Give Away £450

IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:

To the first 1,000 applicants we will send Post Free one sample record, giving on one side, "La Donna e Mobile," sung by Alessandro Bonci; on the reverse side, Souvenir Violin Solo played by Jan Kubelik, on receipt of P.O. 5s. in place of the regular retail price of 12s. (See Coupon below.)

As the FONOTIPIA Records are now for the first time brought to the attention of the British public, we beg to state that

The SOCIETA ITALIANA DI FONOTIPIA, MILAN, has the EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF PUBLICATION by the following:

DRAMATIC AUTHOR:

VICTORIEN SARDOU.

LYRIC ARTISTES:

Ada Adini-Millet Pericles Aramis Teresa Arkel Maria Barrientos Gemma Bellincioni Irene de Bohuss Ramon Blanchart Alessandro Bonci Francesco Maria Bonini Francesco Bravi G. Brejean-Silver Eugenia Burzio-Ravizza Victor Capoul Giorgina Caprile Emma Carelli Rose Caron Lina Cavalieri Peirre Cornubert Ferruccio Corradetti Haricleo Darclee Leon David J. F. Delmas Giuseppe de Luca Maria De Macchi Maria Escalais Leon Escalais Teresina Ferraris Pierre Gailhard Edoardo Garbin Maria Giudice Henri Jerome Giuseppe Krismer Fausta Labia Vincenzo Leliva Felia Litvinne Luigi Longobardi Oreste Luppi Antonio Magini-Coletti Victor Maurel Enrico Nani Francesco Navarini Giuseppe Pacini Regina Pacini Jose Palet Armida Parsi-Pettinella Elisa Petri Regina Pinkert Maria de Reszke Jean de Reszke Giannina Russ Mario Sammarco Emile Scaramberg Piero Schiavazzi Febea Strakosch Adelina Stehle Riccardo Stracciari Amelia Talexis Ernest Van Dyk Elvino Ventura Francisco Vignas Giovanni Zenatello

CONCERT ARTISTES:

Edouard Goll Jan Kubelik Roger-Miclos Jacques Thibaud

Letter from Jan Kubelik to the Manager of the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia:

Dear Sir, Paris, 1st June, 1905.

I had always found that an insuperable difficulty prevented the sound of the violin from being faithfully rendered by "Talking Machines."

Nothing until a short time ago had satisfied me, and I greatly regretted this state of things, which did not allow the execution of the artist to be reproduced exactly as he would have wished, with its sincere sound, its living sentiment, in a word, just as the public had heard and loved it.

Later I have had the good fortune to hear the marvellous records of the Fonotipia.

With what sincerity, with what power, with what beauty they give the exact reflection of the voice of the singer, of the interpretation of the "virtuoso."

This is what we required, and here is the void at length filled up! The painter has his colours, the sculptor his marble, we have the Fonotipia which will perpetuate our memory.

For this reason, dear Sir, I do not hesitate to give you definitely the exclusive concession of the reproduction of my interpretations, and I add that after having played in your laboratories, I can say from experience that never has the voice of my violin been reproduced with such sincerity, such beauty and efficacy.

Accept, dear Sir, my kindest regards.—Yours sincerely,

Jan Kubelik.

There are thousands of records sung by second-rate artistes.
There are a few sung by great artistes.
Why?

Because, to create a complete repertory of Grand Opera sung by great artistes requires an organisation which did not exist, and real artistic management, every Opera requiring special qualities of voice, talent and method, blended in a homogeneous interpretation.

Associating the great artistes, just as publishers associate their authors, the Società Italiana di Fonotipia has been able to form the wanting organization, and the extraordinary constellation of artists enumerated above, including

Alessandro Bonci, Victor Maurel, Jean de Reszke, Giovanni Zenatello, etc.

under the direction of the celebrated composer

Umberto Giordano,

is now occupied in creating the complete repertory of Grand Opera, solos, duets, terzetts, quartetts, etc.

Thus amateurs of music can gradually form a full collection of productions, more perfect than any Opera House can offer, the enormous expense for such an "ensemble" being prohibitive for any theatre.

Every Fonotipia record bears the autograph signature of the artiste as a guarantee that:—

1. The record has really been sung by the artist.
2. It is not an inferior out of date reproduction.

A first catalogue is now ready. Regular supplements will be issued.

TO BE OBTAINED FROM THE FOLLOWING:

ALFRED HAYS, Royal Exchange, E.C.
ARMY & NAVY STORES, Victoria Street, S.W.
HARROD'S STORES, Brompton Road, S.W.
W. WHITELEY, Westbourne Grove.
METHVEN, SIMPSON & CO., Ltd., 83, Princes Street, Edinburgh.
WILLIAM BATTRUM, 13, Sinclair Street, Helensburgh.
J. B. GALBRAITH & SON, 10, Renfield Street, Glasgow.
M. P. GALLOWAY, Ltd., Leith.
PIGGOTT & CO., 112, Grafton Street, Dublin.
W. E. C. RUDALL, Fore Street, Dulverton, Somerset.
G. C. BEDWELL, Ltd., Cecilia Ho., Cambridge.
GOODALL & SHERRATT, 7, Coramarket Street, Oxford.

And other leading Dealers in the Provinces, or from the Sole Agents: THE ODEON CO., (Ch. & J. ULLMANN), 14, Hamsell Street, London, E.C.

GENTLEMEN, **COUPON.**

Please send me a Sample Record, as advertised, for which I enclose P.O. 3/- (no stamps) herewith. (One Record only can be supplied to each applicant, and will be sent out on December 15th next.) Orders will be executed in rotation.

Name _____

D.M. 29/11/'05. Address _____

_____

ODEON COMPANY, 14, HAMSELL STREET, LONDON, E.C.

On these two pages we reproduce the advertisement for Fonotipia Records from "The Daily Mail" of 29th. November, 1905.
It was a long, slim advertisement down the centre of the front page.

Other comments about the discs, new to Britain, were that the Fonotipia enterprise was founded solely for the purpose of taking high class records, that exclusive long term contracts had been effected with some artistes, some contracts to "run for life", and that the discs were being manufactured in Berlin by the International Talking Machine Co. m.b.H.

Some of the "best retail stores" which were stocking Fonotipia records were Harrods, Alfred Hayes, Whitleys, Army and Navy Stores, among others.

The Odeon Company(Ullmanns) proposed to establish one or two Agents in each town, according to size, and all enquiries received were to be forwarded to such agents. Mr. Emil Rink, the manager, was in Berlin, assisting Mr. Prescott in his duties as Managing Director of the International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. Rink, a founder member of the company, had left London in the spring of 1905 to assist with the increased business that was being done in Odeon Records.

Accompanying Michaelis's decision in August to introduce double-sided records in 1905,with the permission of Prescott, was another to provide orchestral accompaniments to the vocal items, at which point Umberto Giordano more strongly entered the story, for it was under his direction that the 'Fonotipia Orchestra' was organised and recorded.

During December letters of praise for Fonotipia had been published in the'Daily Telegraph', the 'Daily Graphic', the 'Daily Chronicle' and the 'Evening Standard', from such celebrities as Jan Kubelik, Jean de Reske and Victorien Sardou.

It was announced in February, 1906, that the International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. at Weissensee had 60 record presses at work where the Fonotipia records were pressed under an exclusive contract. Such records were recorded by the recording engineers of the International Talking Machine Company wherever they and the Fonotipia artistes happened to be.

With reference to that last item, when a reporter from one of the English trade periodicals paid a visit to the Odeon recording studios in Hamsell Street, London E. C., after Ullmann's had become the agents for Fonotipia discs, he reported that here was the studio where Bonci and others had recorded for the Fonotipia label.

The first Fonotipia record supplement was offered to the British public in January, 1906, the second was available in March, 1906, and it was announced that, in a short while, the Company would be in a position to present a repertoire "which should prove a veritable treasure house to all lovers of Grand Opera. Fonotipia are now making a speciality of duets, terzettes, quartettes, quintettes, and etc.... "

FONOTIPIA PASSES TO A BRITISH COMPANY

Many record collectors will be familiar with the legend, in English, "Made for the Fonotipia Companies" impressed on Fontipia, Jumbo and Odeon records. In the light of all that has been written previously about Fonotipia records, have you ever wondered why an allegedly Italian record should have such an inscription in English? Similarly, have you wondered why it appeared also on an allegedly German record the Jumbo Record?

It will be appreciated that the key word in the inscription is the small word F O R where one would have expected "by". "Made by the Fonotipia Companies" would have been

self-explanatory once one knew which companies they were. But, "Made FOR....", did this indicate that others, besides the International Talking Machine Co. m. b. H. were pressing records for "Fonotipia Limited" ?

Yes, "Fonotipia Limited", Registered number 88504, formed in April, 1906, an English Joint Stock Company, became the new owner of the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia of Milan and its Fonotipia disc records.

Right:
A label of a Fonotipia record by Alessandro Bonci.

(Courtesy, Michael Henstock)

Left: The clever use of a Fonotipia label as a greetings card.

SOCIETA' ITALIANA DI FONOTIPIA - MILANO
MARCA DI FABBRICA
EXCLUSIVE CONCESSIONAIRES
Dramatic author
VICTORIEN SARDOU
Lyric artists
ADA ADINI-MILLET - PERICLES ARAMIS - TERESA ARKEL
MARIA BARRIENTOS - GEMMA BELLINCIONI
IRENE DE BOHUSS
RAMON BLANCHART - GIUSEPPE BORGATTI
ALESSANDRO BONCI - FRANCESCO MARIA BONINI
FRANCESCO BRAVI - G. BRÉJEAN-SILVER
EUGENIA BURZIO - VICTOR CAPOUL
GIORGINA CAPRILE - EMMA CARELLI - ROSE CARON
LINA CAVALIERI - ESPERANZA CLASENTI
PIERRE CORNUBERT - FERRUCCIO CORRADETTI
HARICLÉE DARCLÉE - LÉON DAVID - J. F. DELMAS
EMMY DESTINN
GIUSEPPE DE LUCA - MARIA DE MACCHI
MARIA ÉSCALAÏS - LÉON ÉSCALAÏS
TERESINA FERRARIS - PIERRE GAILHARD
EDOARDO GARBIN - EUGENIO GIRALDONI
MARIA GIUDICE - HENRI JÉROME - GIUSEPPE KRISMER
FAUSTA LABIA - VINCENZO LELIVA
FÉLIA LITVINNE - LUIGI LONGOBARDI - ORESTE LUPPI
ANTONIO MAGINI-COLETTI - RICHARD MARTIN
VICTOR MAUREL - ENRICO NANI - FRANCESCO NAVARINI
GIUSEPPE PACINI - REGINA PACINI
JOSÉ PALET - ARMIDA PARSI-PETTINELLA
ELISA PETRI - REGINA PINKERT - JEAN DE RESZKÉ
GIANNINA RUSS - ROSINA STORCHIO
MARIO SAMMARCO - EMILE SCARAMBERG
PIERO SCHIAVAZZI - FEBEA STRAKOSCH
ADELINA STEHLE
RICCARDO STRACCIARI - AMELIA TALEXIS
GUIDO VACCARI - ERNEST VAN DYCK - ELVINO VENTURA
FRANCISCO VIGNAS - GIOVANNI ZENATELLO
Concert artists
EDOUARD GOLL - JAN KUBELIK - ROGER MICLOS
JACQUES THIBAUD

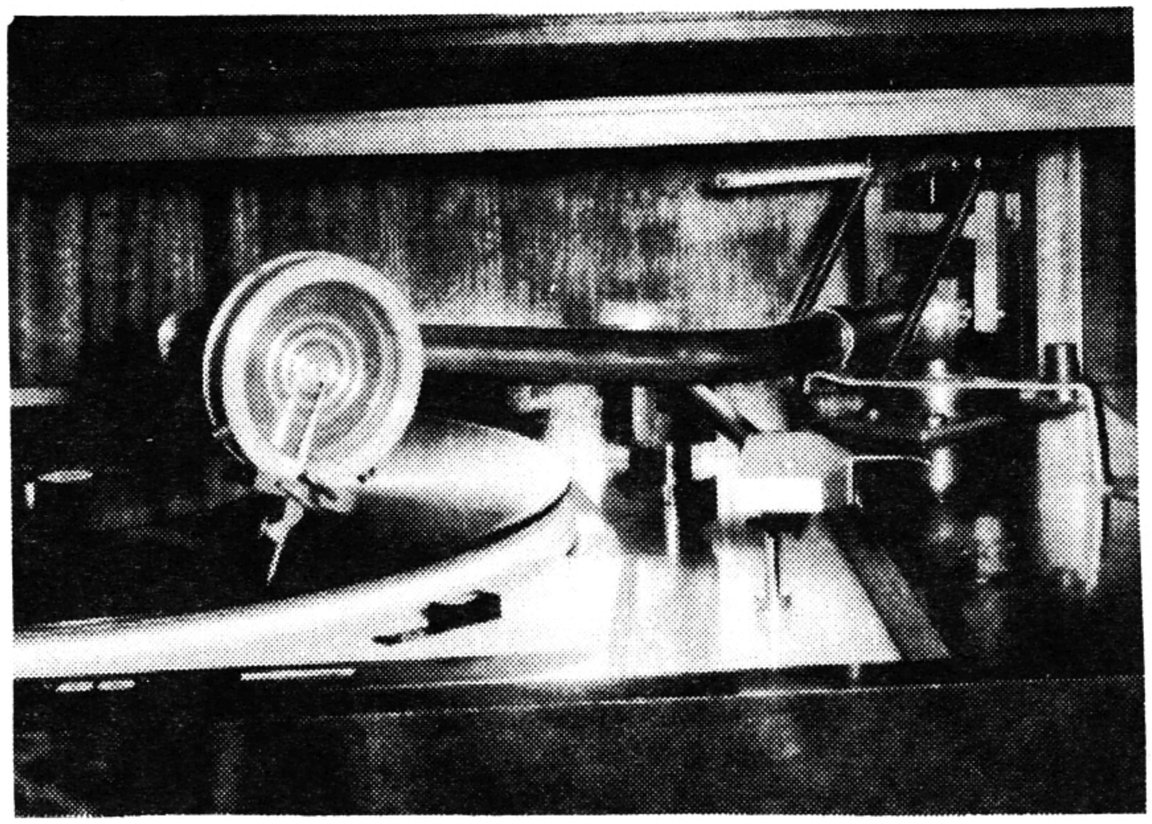
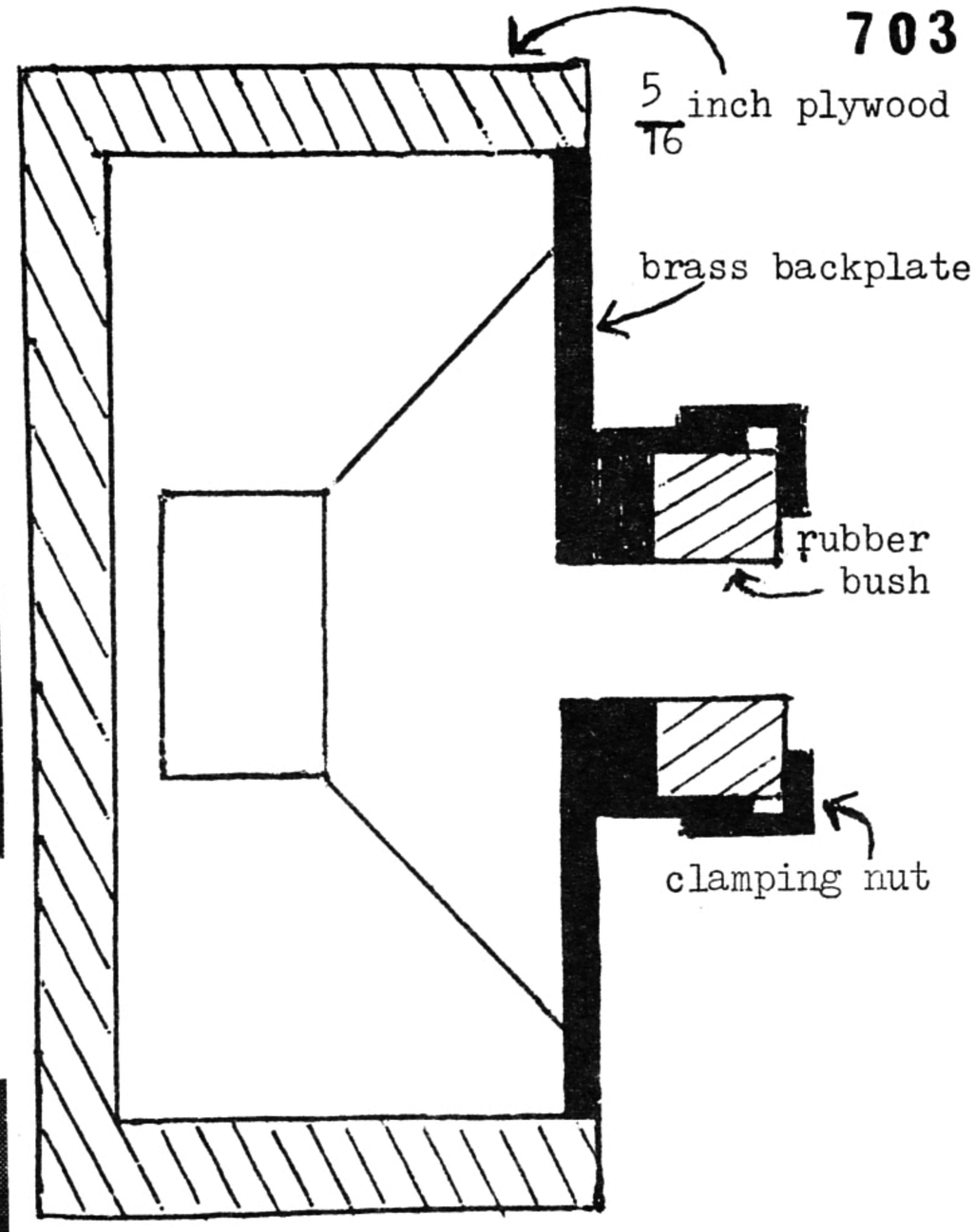


Fig. 2



A section through the speaker enclosure

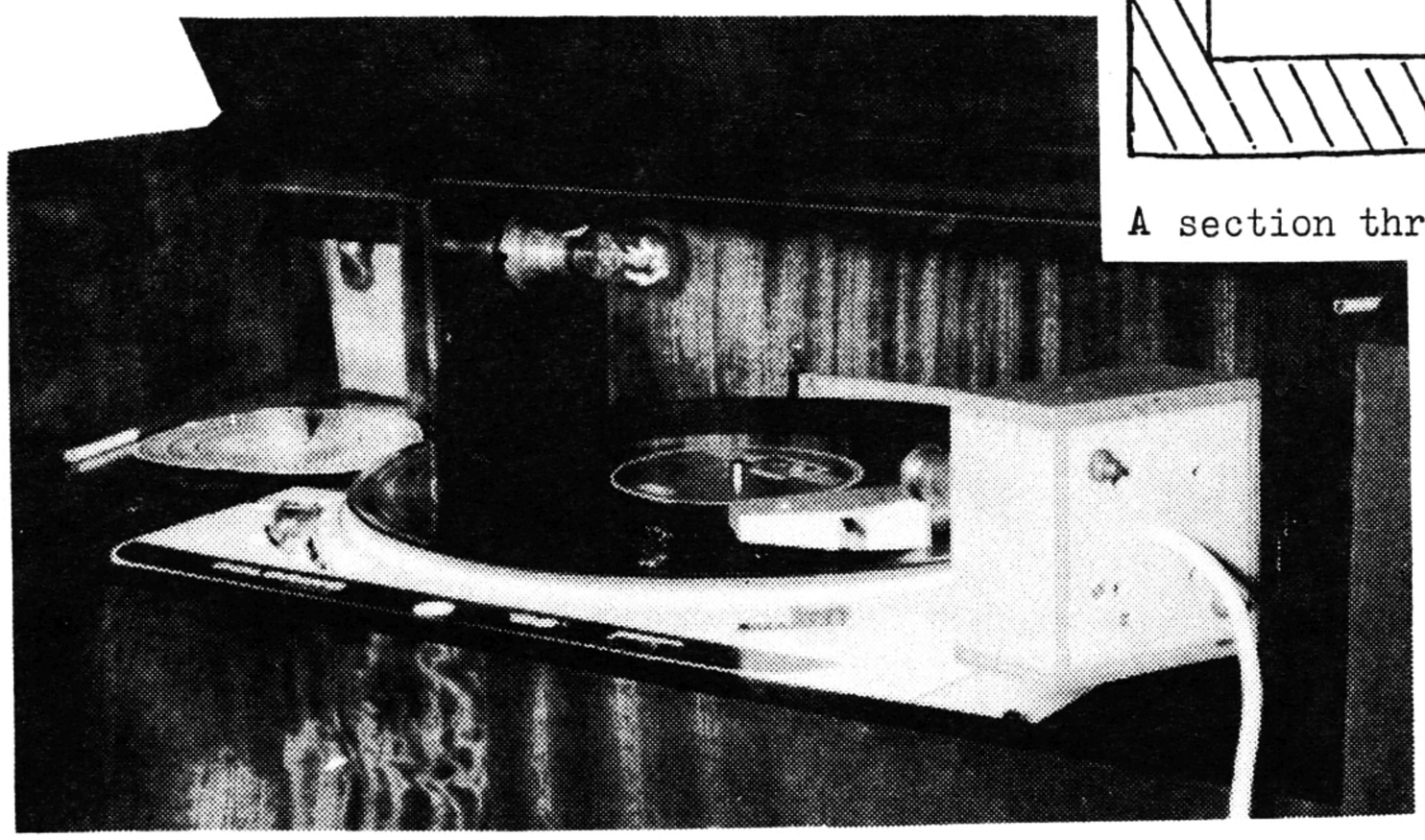


Fig. 3

I am going to adapt to fit the Lenco arm to take thorn needles and with this I shall be equipped to play 78's electrically or acoustically plus the facilities for playing LPs as outlined above. Incidentally, the large horn is extremely efficient as a means of transforming electrical energy into acoustic energy. Very little of the 10 watts output is required to produce an ample volume of sound.

To comment on the weight of the tonearm.... The soundbox (one of my own make) is of duraluminium and weighs only 2½ ounces, most of the tonearm weight is taken by the two springs. I use triangular bamboo needles almost exclusively and needle point breakdown is extremely rare.

RECORD REVIEWS

JOHN WANT

Elgar began his association with the gramophone when in January, 1914, he recorded "Carrisma". This association was to last until his death just twenty years later. In 1914 he was already in his late fifties and past his creative peak. All his major works except the cello concerto were behind him: ahead lay the World War I, the most terrible in history and the death of his wife who had recognised the immense potential of this self-taught genius from Worcestershire and had fought so hard to help him establish himself.

During the period from 1914 to 1925 a large part of Elgar's repertoire was recorded. With the issue of this seventh LP by Pearl all published pre-electric recordings have now been transferred - and are in this album.

The records are accompanied by notes by Dr. Jerrold Moore.

This is probably the most important transfer of 78's to LP ever made and Pearl are both to be congratulated on their enterprise and to be thanked for making it possible for us all to hear these recordings made by the composer himself. I recommend this set most highly to anybody interested in the pre-electric era of recording.

In the review * denotes that the score has been abridged. Numbers without brackets are the original British catalogue numbers. All single sided records were later re-issued in double sided form and the new number in the D series is shown in brackets.

GEM 110/A (Vol.1)

Wand of Youth Suites Op. 1 (a) & 1 (b)
2-0729, D48, D408 (D178) also unissued variant recordings.

Salut d'Amour Op. 12 2-0512 (D180)
Pomp and Circumstance Op.39 No.1* 2-0511 (D179)
Pomp and Circumstance Op.39 No.4* 2-0517 (D179)

By the time he was twelve Elgar had already written some music for a play that he was creating with his brothers and sisters (he was one of seven children). This material was re-used when, in early middle age, he came to write the two Wand of Youth Suites.

The music is of instant appeal, Elgarian in the best sense of the word, and the simple orchestration of the suites helps their recording by the acoustic process. The first of these recordings was issued as a single side in 1918 but by mid 1919 when the set was completed black label records were being issued in double sided form.

The variant recordings were from takes at a session in 1919 and came from Elgar's own collection.

Salut d'Amour needs little introduction: a delightful triviality that has remained popular for three quarters of a century. Elgar sold it outright as a piano piece to Schott's in 1889.

The two Pomp and Circumstance marches are probably the most widely known of any of his work. These recordings together with that of Salut d'Amour were all made at his second recording session in June, 1914. As Dr. Moore points out, they were played very "deliberately" to allow for the limitations of the early recording process. No.1 from which Land of Hope and Glory was derived has been cut drastically but leaving the "big tune" intact and both the marches, unlike Salut d'Amour which was essentially a salon piece, suffered considerably from the restrictions imposed by a small orchestra. The gramophone audience had to let technology catch up with the music: his electrical recordings of Pomp and Circumstance marches became best sellers.

G E M 111 (Vol.II)

The Starlight Express (Nicholls & Mott) Various singles (D455/8)
Cockaigne Overture Op. 40* 2-0728 (D178)
Dream of Gerontius - Prelude and Angel's Farewell* 2-0775 (D181)
Carissma 0967 (D176)

In 1915 Elgar wrote the music for a play for children - The Starlight Express - based on "A Prisoner in Fairyland" by Algernon Blackwood. It was staged for the Christmas season of 1915/16. Elgard showed in this music that insight into the world of children which again became apparent near the end of his life when he wrote the "Nursery Suite". He used some of the material from his own childhood composition the "Wand of Youth". The songs are delightful and both Agnes Nicholls and Charles Mott, with his delightful light baritone voice, do them full justice. So too does the recording, an at times one can easily forget that it was made as early as 1915. So far as I can trace this is the most complete recital of the songs currently in the catalogue.

Again Elgar was to face the sort of disappointment that characterised his life. After one month's run at the Kingsway Theatre the play closed. But for the enterprise of the Gramophone Company this music would probably be forgotten: the eight-record issue was launched successfully at a press luncheon at the Savoy in April, 1916.

The Cockaigne Overture is today far better known. Completed in 1901 and first performed by the R. P. O. in the Queens Hall under Elgar's baton, its programme is simple: the sights of Edwardian ELondon. Elgar conducts this 1917 recording with great vigour and superb attention to tempo but the orchestra is too small and the score too heavily cut to do justice to his work. The excerpt from the Dream of Gerontius is the first recording of any part of his greatest work and the editing of the score is ingenius in that it provides melodic satisfaction on one brief 12-inch side. Carissma, composed in 1914, is an insignificant work save that it was the first that Elgar ever recorded - in January,1914.

G E M 112 (Vol III)

Fringes of the fleet (Mott, Henry, Stewart & Barratt)
02734/7 & 4-2933 (D543/4 & E72)
Violin Concerto Op. 61 (a)* Marie Hall 2-07942/5,(D79/80)
Carillon Op. 75 (b) Henry Ainley (Speaker) 2-0522/3 (D177)

Fringes of the Fleet is a setting of poems by Rudyard Kipling that Elgar took on tour around war-time Britain with great success. When it returned to the London Coliseum, Kipling objected to the treatment of his poems and the "show" was taken off: again disappointment for Elgar.

The Violin Concerto was first performed in 1910 with Fritz Kreisler, to whom it is dedicated, as soloist. It was written when the composer was at the peak of his creativity and popularity and was the last of his major works to achieve instant acclaim. It is a deeply moving work that makes enormous physical and technical demands of the soloist. Musically it is a far greater work than the 'cello concerto.

When this first recording of a major work by Elgar was amde (1916) Fritz Kreisler was kept apart from us by the war and Marie Hall was chosen as soloist. She had at one time been a pupil of Elgar's when he taught the violin in Malvern, some twenty years earlier. The work was cut drastically to make it fit four 12-inch sides but it is still coherent musically. I like Marie Hall's playing with great lyricism and understanding. But Albert Sammons (Columbia L.2346/51) seems to me to be more to convey the deep sensuousnes of the work and I would urge anyone interested in Elgar to try to obtain the Sammons set - or its recently deleted LP transcription (HLM 7011).

Carillon, another war-time work, is bsed on the translation of a poem by the Belgian poet Cammaerts, written after Germany had used this hitherto neutral country as a short cut to the less defended areas of northern France, and sacked much of it on the way. The work fitted perfectly the mood of the moment - deep sympathy for Belgium. Elgar took it on tour - a waste of his talents except that it was unquestionably a morale booster. In this recording made early in 1915, Henry Ainley recites the verses in a way that is fascinatingly different from the spoken word today. Unlike "Polonia" it is an intriguing souvenir of the period.

G E M 113 (Vol.IV)

Polonia Op. 76* (D493)
Three Bavarian Dances Op.27 2-0519,2-0530,2-0824
'Cello Concerto Op.85* (Beatrice Harrison as soloist) D541, D545
Chanson de Nuit Op.15, No.1 2-0885 (D180)

Polonia, recorded here in 1919, was written in World War I and based Polish airs: profits from it went to Polish war charities. The Bavarian dances were written in 1895 as orchestral versions of three of six choral songs that he composed in the same year. They have immense charm - fine examples of the lighter side of Elgar's music. I am delighted by his tempi in this recording: ho well he has recaptured the spirit of the young Elgar of the eighteen nineties.

The main work on this disc is,however, the Cello Concerto - his last major composition. This is, alas, a rather poorly structured work that never matched the splendour of his violin concerto. But it is also - I think - the intimate expression of a man, saddened immeasurably by World War I, perhaps saddened also by the realisation that his own creativity was in decline. Despite its technical limitations it is a lovely and deeply moving work.

Beatrice Harrison was chosen by the Gramophone Company after Suggia had demanded an excessive fee. I feel that neither in this recording nor in its electrical re-make (D 1507/9) did she succeed - despite he unquestionable ability - in expressing the composer's tragic statement as poignantly as Paul Tortelier or Jacqueline du Pré. It is interesting to compare the recording of the disc under review with "Carissima" - made five years earlier. Recording techniques had made great strides in that short period - a fact confirmed by the "Enigma" Variations in the next volume.

Chanso de Nuit partners his better known Chanson de Matin.

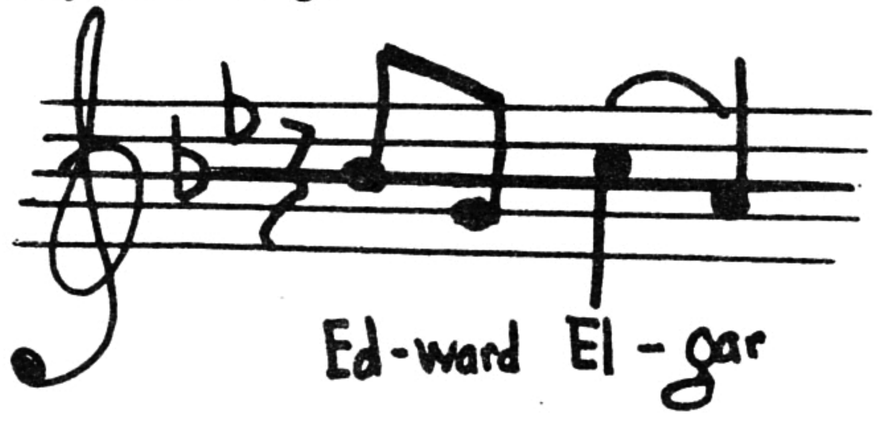
G E M 114 (Vol.V)

The Sanguine Fan Op.81 D596
Scene from King Olaf Op.30 D614
Variations on an Original Theme* (Enigma) Op. 36 D578, D582, D596, D602

The most significant work on this disc is the "Enigma" variations, Elgar's first major work. Although in 1899 it was not received effusively it unquestionably pointed the path to the other great works which were to follow over the next decade.

As music the variations are instantly enjoyable and make no great intellectual demands of the listener. Dedicated "to my friends pictured within" each variation depicts one of Sir Edward's then close acquaintances. The first (C.A.E.) was his wife: the majestic "Nimrod" August Jaeger of Novello's whose encouragement played such a röle in helping Elgar to achieve the great things of which he was capable. (Nimrod was a hunter - in German "Jaegar"). And so we meet, one by one, the musical circle in which the forty-two year old composer lived. The last variation is Elgar himself.

So many musicians have sought to identify the "Enigma" theme. Was it the counterpoint to a well-known tune? I like the explanation given in "Elgar" by Michael Hurd (Faber & Faber). He refers to Michael Kennedy's "Portrait of Elgar" (O. U. P.) in which reference is made to the composer's occasional signing of letters with the first four notes of the theme. They fit perfectly "Edward Elgar":



Could the work represent (a) the Elagar of 1899 (the theme) (b) his friends (the variations) and (c) the person into whom he sees himself developing (the final variation) ?

These variations awaited the advent of electrical recording for full justice to be done to the score but the recording is none the less startlingly good for the pre-electric era. I am grateful - very grateful - to HMV and Pearl for making it possible to hear this 55-year old recording (during the completion of which Elgar was driven to utter despair by the death of his wife). It is a performance of very great stature.

G E M 115 (Vol. VI)

Sea Pictures Op. 37 Leila Megane (Contralto)	D674/5
Transcriptions of Handel's Overture in D Minor	D838
In the South Overture Op.50	D785/6
Transcriptions of Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in C Minor Op.86	D838

Elgar's song cycle "Sea Pictures" was first performed at the Norwich Festival of 1899 with Elgar as conductor and none other than the young Clara Butt as soloist. It is interesting to ponder on the future that lay ahead of both composer and soloist: she was then in her twenties and her remarkable voice must have been at its greatest. The songs were settings of various poems: one by the composer's wife and one by Elizabeth Barrett Browning - the wife of the great Browning. As a complete work "Sea Pictures comes nowhere near the other work of 1899 - the Enigma Varia Variations but it has pleased enough over more then 75 years to have stayed firmly in the repertoire. I like it, but I am not impressed by the singing of Leila Megane and it is interesting to read in "Elgar on Record that these four sides were the result of two recording sessions. Two masters cut at the first session were rejected on grounds of bad enunciation: two others on the grounds of "bad notes and enunciation" In fact some twenty matrices were made in order to obtain the four issued sides.

In the South was composed in the winter of 1903/4 when Elgar, his wife and his daughter sought escape fr from the English winter by a long stay in Italy. Elgar enjoyed himself initially but as winter wore on he was driven back to England by the excruciating cold of Italy's February. Nevertheless the work was ready for its first performance, under Elgar's baton, at the Elgar Festival of March, 1904, at Covent Garden. It is a pleasing, exciting work that seems to be able to accept the limitations of acoustic recording more easily than "Cockaigne", although the relatievly late date of this recording - 1921 - may account for this.

The remaining two works on this LP are drawn from the numerous transcriptions that Elgar wrote. These two are perhaps the most important for many a romantic composer had been drawn to the works of the classical period.

G E M 116 (Vol. VII)

Symphony No. 2 Op. 63	D 1012/7
Light of Life Op. 29 (Meditation)	D1017

Only the second of his two symphonies was recorded by Elgar before acoustic techniques had given way to electrical. This recording was made in 1924 and 1925 - indeed three recording sessions were necessary before the eleven - side set was complete. Unlike the violin and the 'cello concertos the work was recorded almost without abridging it and although the sound is characteristically "thin", it is of a remarkably high standard, with the instruments beautifully defined.

Elgar had conducted the first performance of his second symphony at the London Music Festival in May, 1911. But it was not received as enthusiastically as his first symphony or the violin concerto had been a few years earlier. For one thing the coronation of King George V was about to take place and the mood of the work - often introspective - was probably at variance with that of the London public revelling in what was to be the last great event of that post-Edwardian heyday. Little did they know that their stable world of (comparative) prosperity was shortly to be shattered by World War I, never to return. Perhaps Elgar had some subconscious inkling of this, for the second theme seems to me to lack the bold assurance of the first.

This is a superb performance to which the recording engineers - despite their limited equipment - did full justice and is for me one of the most enjoyable versions of the second symphony in catalogue - despite its age.

The Meditation from the "Light of Life" was the last work conducted by Elgar to be recorded by the acoustical process.

E.Bayly

TOPIC RELEASES

Recently I received the current catalogue of TOPIC records. While but a few of the records are actually reissues from 78 rpm records the medium of the folksong and music is partly as old as the '78' records. Some folk song is recent for it is a living tradition. I only regret that so many of the modern singers have deserted individuality in favour of a nasal tone with a "hard throat" - just the things I was always taught to avoid. Through the recordings of Topic one is able to go back with older singers to an age when the songs came out of their lips from relaxed throats, and each one sounded only like himself.

One such was George Maynard from Copthorne, Sussex, who was exposed to the ear of 'The General Public' during the monumental "As I Roved Out" programmes of the BBC during which Peter Kennedy, Alan Lomax, Seamus Ennis, Sean O'Boyle Hamish Henderson and others proved that, even in the 1950's, many genuine folk singers and musicians were still alive and performing in rural areas despite the onslaught of urban dance & classical music. I recall those many Sunday morning programmes like a breath of fresh air.

well past eighty, George Maynard still possessed a phenominal memory for songs. The collection

on Topic 12T286 "Ye Subjects of England" - Traditional songs from Sussex sung by George Maynard, was recorded mainly by Peter Kennedy in 1956; "Shooting Goshen's Cocks Up" having been recorded in 1962 by Paul Carter & Ken Stubbs.

George Maynard, although well past eighty, had a strong voice, but having been recorded into a microphone privately the style is that of an old man singing intimately. He is unaccompanied. It is unfortunate that the public at large was insufficiently "educated", or "ready", or accustomed to hearing folksongs sung by an unaccompanied folk singer, so that Maynard never knew the personal pleasure of seeing an LP record of himself issued during his lifetime, although he must have realised that the great store of songs which he sang for the B.B.C. and others made him important.

Although not a composer he seems to have possessed a selective memory which retained most interesting songs. He also had a "store" of uncommon music hall songs which were not recorded at the time for it was considered more important to record the folksongs, but the author of the sleeve notes, Ken Stubbs, regrets that policy. The importance of the music hall song as an urban social document as well as folksong is now realised.

We must be grateful to all those farsighted pioneers, right down to those of the 1950's who recorded something. Even at that date who would have expected a folksong group like, say, The Spinners, to be popular with TV audiences or to have a 'full house' sign outside a large theatre like the Bournemouth Winter Gardens? It is gratifying that despite the persistent "plugging" of "pop groups" whose utterances bring big business to the record industry there is a large active following of young people who treasure and wish to keep our folksong heritage alive.

This record of "Pop" Maynard is for those who know folksong and wish to delve beyong the "general appeal" approach. I knew his voice from the broadcasts of the 1950's so knew what to expect. Having listened several times I find myself enjoying the record with each hearing.

Joseph Taylor, whose LP re-issue from G & T's I reviewed a few years ago, was a tenor with embellished trills. George Maynard was a straight baritone. Both were singing at the same time, though Taylor was a generation before Maynard. Their material is of the same genre and culled from the very traditional to urban items written as if a folksong.

One such "rustic idyll" is "The Sun Being Set", telling the life of a farm worker, is sung so reflectively that one feels that it must have expressed the contentment which Maynard enjoyed in his life in a small region in the country. While some of the songs in this collection are well-known, like "The Sweet Nightingale", there are others of very local distribution or unique. This is ably explained in Mike Yates' notes.

If you like folksongs and wish to increase your enjoyment by listening to one who was their embodiment, being an important "first hand" performer, you will enjoy this excellent record. This is true folksong. I might say that I have been waiting twenty years for it to be released and it lives up to my expectations.

Topic has reissued another LP culled from the 78's of Scott Skinner and some new recordings of violin music from the Shetland Islands, which I shall review in our next issue.

The songs included are - Polly on the Shore, The Sweet Nightingale, Locks & Bolts, Down by the Seaside, Jack the Jolly Tar-O, The Seeds of Love, Shooting Goshen's Cocks Up, William Taylor, Rolling in the Dew, A Sailor in the North Country, The Banks of Claudy, Three Sons of Rogues, The Weaver's Daughter, A Wager, a wager, The Sun Being Set

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F A M O U S O P E R A A R I A S & N E A P O L I T A N S O N G S

Recorded from EDISON Cylinders.

I received a present of this wonderful two-record LP set from its producer Danillo Konvalinka, as an absolute surprise. As described in its title the set is a re-recording from the uncommon Italian series of Edison cylinders. The principal singer is Francisco Daddi who was in the première of 'I Pagliacci' and others are Vargas, Sala, Mielino. We will review the set properly in our next issue.

Available from Danillo Konvalinka, The Music Museum, 18. High Street, Wiscasset, Maine 04578, U.S. A.

L E T T E R to the E D I T O R.,

Dear Mr. Bayly,

Whatever happened to the giant Nipper & Gramophone which H.M.V. used to have for exhibitions ?

Sincerely, Mike Evans.

Answer... EMI still possess them & they're always on show in a special window over the main entrance to the offices of the EMI record factory 1 - 3. Uxbridge Road, Hayes, Middlesex. (Actually virtually in Southall.) Clearly visible from the road outside. Melba's foundation stone is there too.

The New-York Times, Sunday, March 24, 1878

THE PHONOGRAPH EXHIBITED.

PROF. ARNOLD'S DESCRIPTION OF THE MACHINE IN CHICKERING HALL - VARIOUS EXPERIMENTS, WITH REMARKABLE RESULTS.

An intelligent audience about half filled Chickering Hall last evening to listen to Professor J. W. Arnold's description of Edison's speaking phonograph. On the stage was a formidable array of apparatus. There were no less than six tables, all covered with mysterious instruments. On one was a guitar rampart, with a complication of wires and tubes attached to it. This afterwards proved to be a singing and vocal telephone. On another was a curious glass bottle, which turned out to be an instrument for measuring the vibrations of sound, called a syren. There were half - a - dozen magic lanterns, with all sorts of trestle-work and mirrors and magnifying glasses about them, several gas-retorts, four or five tuning forks, of various sizes, a toy hemonicon, a blackboard with a bar of music painted upon it, an immense muslin screen, a huge papier maché human ear, and a little machine that at first appeared to be an ordinary crimping machine. The Professor's assistant, Dr. Miller, had great trouble in arranging and re-arranging the various instruments. He finished at length and disappeared, and there was a long pause. The audience stood it until twenty minutes past the hour, and then began stamping vigorously. Finally the gas was turned on, and simultaneously the Professor entered. For an hour and a half he kept his hearers interested by a lucid explanation of the physical construction of the human organs of speech and hearing and of the philosophy of sound, the lecture being illustrated at intervals with curious experiements, in which not only the apparatus before described, but also the organ of the hall, was made to play a part.

Finally, holding up the little crimping machine, he said it was the phonograph that everybody had been waiting for. On closer examination it was seen to consist of a little fly-wheel with a polished outer surface grooved with a delicate spiral thread. Its axle was also grooved spirally so as to run sideways, and was attached to a crank handle. On one side was an adjustable iron arm with a hole at the top, on the under side of which was a piece of ferrotype plate clamped on both sides around the edges by pieces of india rubber as to leave free a surface of only a fraction of an inch in diameter in the middle. Attached beneath this was a steel point which touched the surface of the wheel. The Professor placed a narrow strip of tin foil covered with little pricks in spiral circles on the face of the wheel, fastening the edges with gum. Then he held a paper funnel over the hole in the adjustable arm and turned the crank. The first result was a succession of wheezy sounds which nobody understood. The Professor ran the wheel back to its original position and tried again, slowly this time. Then was heard quite distinctly the story of Mary's little lamb in the voice of a decrepid old man with his mouth full of water. A third trial, the crank being turned very fast, elicited a repetition of the story in the shrill voice of an angry old woman, heard at a distance, but perfectly audible. Another slip was placed upon the wheel - a virgin one this time - and the Professor talked, shouted, and sang at it, all of which was correctly repeated by the instrument afterward. This closed the lecture, but on invitation, a majority of the audience subsequently ascended the stage, and Dr. Miller kindly gave a nearer introduction to the little machine. Among other things he took one of the already indented slips of tinfoil, and while turning it shouted absurd things at it at intervals. These came out in their proper place at a subsequent turning, in this style:

"Mary had a little - oh shut up - lamb. Its fleece was white - give us a rest - as snow. And everywhere - go to bed - that Mary went, the lamb was sure to go - How's that?" Dr. Miller said that the machine in use offered a fair criterion of the degree of loudness yet attained, but it was expected that this would be improved upon hereafter. The Doctor tore up the strips of tin foil that had been used, and distributed them among the audience. There was a wild scramble for these keepsakes.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE DENMARK

The steam-ship Denmark, of the National Line, arrived at her dock yesterday after a long and stormy passage, during which she lost her rudder. She left London on 1st. March, had very heavy weather, and on the twelfth the gale increased in violence. A terrific sea was running, and the vessel's decks were constantly flooded. Two huge waves struck her with unusual force, and it was soon ascertained that the rudder had been broken off a few inches below the water mark. The Denmark was then 1,400 miles from New York. On the following day a heavy spar was made fast to a fifty fathom hawser and dropped over the stern. By means of this drag, which was worked by chains, she was steared for a few days, when the wind died out and the drag became useless. Captain Williams then hit upon an ingenius expedient by which he was enabled to reach port. Two heavy iron plates were lashed to one end of a spar which was put over the stern and used as a rudder. Chains ran from this through blocks on either quarter to the steam winch. This arrangement was said to work nearly as well as a rudder. The vessel will go on the dry-dock and have a new rudder put in. Captain Williams' management of her after the loss of the rudder is regarded as a remarkable piece of seamanship.

SUNDAY, JULY 24, 1892.

WANTS THE PHONOGRAPH

JOHN BULL CRYING FOR AN AMERICAN INVENTION.

NO TRACE OF THE WONDERFUL INSTRUMENT TO BE FOUND IN ENGLAND - THE EDISON COMPANY SAID TO BE UNABLE TO MEET THE FOREIGN DEMAND AT PRESENT.

Washington, 23rd. July. - When one hears John Bull sighing for an American invention there is a disposition to forgive him the many ill-natured flings he indulges in yearly at the expense of the United States and its institutions. John is now actually crying for Edison's phonograph. The London "Daily News" is unable to find any trace of the wonderful instrument in England, and thus expresses itself:-

" A few years ago it was announced that the famous American inventor had perfected this instrument, and some public experiments that were given certainly seemed to support this view. A simple little apparatus, costing probably, not more than a sovereign to make, was made to reproduce indefinitely any sound, even to a grand instrumental performance that had taken place in another hemisphere. Various were the speculations as to the manifold use of the new contrivance. Friends at a distance were to hear each other's voices, messages could be left at people's houses which could not possibly be distorted in the process of passing through the mind of an untutored servant, businessmen could quietly talk into a little trumpet-like apperture, and their clerks could hear their actual instructions at any subsequent period. Up to now, however, we have been doomed to disappointment. Where is a phonograph to be bought? I do not know, and none of my acquaintances seems better informed. In France an article can be patented only on condition that it is bona fide on sale to the public within a brief period, I believe twelve months. The time has come to consider the expediency of such a condition being exacted in England."

If the Englishman could spend a few days in Washington, where the phonograph has become an established institution, he would have greater reason for discontent. Here he would see all the "speculations as to the manifold use of the new cotrivance" made good. He could sit in front of the "simple little apparatus" which, however, costs more than a "sovereign" to make, and by the aid of a rubber tube leading to each ear, listen to entrancing music, sermons of leading American divines, orations, reports of conventions, or ordinary business conversations. He might even talk into the mouthpiece of the apparatus, and buy a cylinder recording of his remarks. Some day, when the phonograph appears in England, he might entertain his friends with the utterances which the cylinder had imprisoned so long. He might not recognise his own voice in the sounds given forth by the apparatus but his friends would. That is a peculiarity of the phonograph.

Just why the Edison phonograph has not invaded England is a matter for the Edison Phonograph Company of New York to explain. A gentleman connected with the company which conducts the phonograph business in this city told a correspondent of "The Times" today that he understood that the parent company was unable to meet the foreign demand for the phonograph at present. It seems unlikely that John Bull will be forced to wait much longer for the enjoyment of the wonderful apparatus which thousands of Americans would hardly know how to get along without.

The phonograph now in use in this country is a great improvement upon the instrument which Edison first placed before the public a few years ago. The original machine was so complicated that experts alone managed to make it work. To this fact is attributed the success of the Graphophone, an apparatus invented by Sumner Tainter and Chichester Bell of Washington, possessing all the good qualities of the original Edison machine while lacking many of the objectionable ones.

The Graphophone was designed as a business machine. It has a cylinder which may be sent through the mails at ordinary letter postage rates. This feature alone made it very popular.

The success of the Graphophone made Edison set to work to improve the Phonograph. Two years ago he produced the new phonograph which is now coming into general use. In the work of reconstructing the instrument he removed at least fifty parts. It is far lighter and infinitely easier to handle than the original. Indeed, its simplicity and the readiness with which it may be operated by a novice is among its remarkable feature.

Even in the United States the Phonograph is not so well known that a brief description of its principle and operation may not be gievn. Besides, it is one of the objects of this article to show John Bull what an extraordinary blessing he is at present being deprived of.

The perfected Phonograph occupies less space than an ordinary typewriting machine, and is much less complicated. It weighs about sixty pounds, including the motor. The foundation principle consists in cutting minute indentations in a spiral around the wax surface of a small cylinder by means of a delicately adjusted cutting instrument attached to a sensitive diaphragm,which is actuated by sound waves, and afterward reproducing the same sounds by causing the cylinder to be revolved beneath a similar diaphragm, with a non-cutting needle-point attached, which follows in and out of the indentations produced by the first cutting instrument, and thus sets in motion the same sound waves. The wax cylinder is less than six inches in length, and is held in place by suitable clamps.

The cylinder is made to revolve either by a treadle moved by the foot, after the style

of a sewing machine, or by a small electric motor, as may be desired, the latter having for its motive power a small storage or other ordinary electric battery. A rubber tube with vulcanite ear pieces, to enable the listener to hear more distinctly, completes the apparatus.

Cylinders with messages recorded upon them, can be sent by mail enclosed in light mailing cases provided for that purpose, at ordinary postal rates.

Obviously, one of the first uses of the phonograph is as a stenographer. Leaving out of consideration the superiority in absolute accuracy which the phonograph necessarily possesses in reproducing the words spoken into it, persons having employment for stenographers will appreciate the advantage of having a "mechanical stenographer", which wants neither luncheon hours nor holidays: which can work as easily in the dark as in the light; which is always at hand; which never interrupts the speaker or loses a word; whose compensation is fixed once and for all, and which never gets ill or weary. Any intelligent boy or girl can transcribe the dictation by typewriter or pen.

One point put forth by the phonograph people, which is worth noting is that "the most ignorant never hesitates to convey accurately his meaning when speaking face to face, while to write with accuracy and fluency requires previous training and education. Besides, even the most scholarly and rapid writer cannot write one-tenth as rapidly as he can talk."

The field for this wonderful instrument would seem to be almost limitless. In the home circle,for instance, it bids fair to take a firm hold. Recipients of phonograms may enjoy the pleasure of listening to the voices of their absent correspondents. The sayings of children may be perpetuated in the language and tones of the speakers. The cold characters of a letter written by a dear friend afford but sorry comfort after that friend is dead. How different would be the sensation if those words and the tones of the speaker could be heard as from a living voice! This is one of the advantages of the phonograph.

Another is found in the fact that the possessor of a phonograph may sit with his family or his friends in his home and listen to operas, solos, sermons, speeches, or recitations. Cylinders containing all these entertaining features may be bought for a small amount. Any number of rubber tubes with ear pieces may be attached to the apparatus, or a horn or cone, conveying the sounds distinctly to all in the room, may be employed. Many a convalescent will yet be cheered by the Edison phonograph.

In Washington there are upward of 200 phonographs in daily use. Most of them are rented, but the local company operating them is now prepared to sell instruments. A complete outfit, including motor, may now be bought for $200 to $250. The rental rates vary somewhat from those which obtain in New York where the machines are manufactured. The cost of transportation of the machine is made to figure in the calculation. The lowest price by the year here is $85, payable in advance. Paid monthly, the amount is considerably higher.

The Government has become a liberal patron of the phonograph. About seventy-five instruments are employed by the different Government departments, including those used at the Capitol. There are five instruments in the official reporters' room of the House of Representatives. The official reporters of the Senate have six, and would not willingly return to the old system.

One who enters the rooms of the official reporters in business hours will usually

find half a dozen of them talking to this mechanical listener. Every word spoken by Senators or Representatives in debate on the floor is poured into this willing ear. Later, the apparatus tells the tale to the typewriter operator, who transfers it to paper for the use of the "Congressional Record" printers. Mr. T. F. Shuey, first assistant reporter of the Senate, estimates the saving of time and labor by the use of the phonograph to be fully 50%. The House reporters are equally enthusiastic concerning the invention. Once the remarks of the reporter are on the cylinder, they remain there until the cylinder is "planed" for fresh use. The typewriter operator, by manipulating a switch can regulate the flow of words. Should he fail to catch a word, the phonograph will repeat it for him. A number of committees of both houses are supplied with the invention. The Department of Labor owns the phonograph it uses, but the other departments pay rental for theirs. Many Senators and Representatives have become friends of the phonograph. They can dictate as rapily as they choose, when they choose, and utilise for the transcribing a very much less expensive class of help than would otherwise be the case. Postmaster General Wanamaker has a phonograph in his Washington residence; so have a number of departmental officials.

Habitués of hotel lobbies are familiar with the machine which for a "nickel in the slot" entertain the hearer with musical selections. Most of the musical "records", as the wax cylinders are termed which reproduce the music of individuals or bands, come from Washington, the local company making a specialty of them. The Marine Band and several specialists are frequently employed to make melody to be reproduced on the cylinders. The musicians arrange themselves near a half dozen machines, and not a note is lost. The New Jersey Phonograph Company makes a specialty of vocal "records" and the Ohio Company is famous for its Irish dialect "records". Doubtless the other State companies - and there are many of them - have features equally entertaining.

The phonograph has undoubtedly come to stay. It is not considered by its inventor to be perfect, and improvements may be looked for. Several thousand of the new instruments are now in use in American cities. The price will tumble one of these days, and then will the wonderful talking machine come into its own, which will eventually comprise the civilised world. In the meantime, John Bull should possess his soul in patience.

CAMERIST IN WALL STREET

SHE ATTRACTED MUCH NOTICE AS SHE "TOOK" THE IMMORTAL GEORGE.

The amateur photographer invaded Wall Street yesterday afternoon. She was a trim young woman in a blue suit and black straw hat, and she wanted to get a picture of the statue of George Washington which stands on the steps of the Sub-Treasury. So she set up her camera in front of the office where J. Pierpont Morgan reorganises railroads, just across the street from the Sub-Treasury, and proceeded to cover her head with a cloth and shove slides into the camera after the orthodox fashion.

It was after the close of business hours, but the street was well filled with brokers and clerks homeward bound. The photographer, of course, attracted their attention, and they stopped to see the show, the result being one of the curious spectacles to be observed on Wall Street now and then. Fat men stood in the blazing sunlight and didn't notice how hot the combination of the sun above and asphalt pavement below was making them: messenger boys formed an inner circle about the camera, but at what passes for a respectful distance with their kind; truck drivers halted their teams, and curious faces appeared at windows commanding a view of the camera.

But the young woman didn't mind a bit. She spoiled a plate, used another, got her picture, folded up her camera and its legs, and departed with the greatest composure in the world. And then the crowd disappeared as quickly as it had assembled.

We are grateful to William Brey of New Jersey who "extracted" the foregoing from the"New York Times", which he has been reading to extract items relating to the phonograph or Edison. He writes, "In the N. Y. T. for Friday, 22nd. March, 1878, amidst the classified ads for furnished rooms, steamboat excursions, lectures and stage plays, there appeared a small ad for Professor J. W. S. Arnold's Saturday lecture - - Tickets, 75¢. Reserved seats 25¢ extra - - at Chickering Hall,(which had been built by the Chickering Piano Company on the corner of 5th. Avenue and 18th. Street for recitals and lectures. The report of Arnold's lecture appeared the following Sunday. I have included a couple of other stories which appeared on the same pages as the 'main' items to lend a little colour to the scene and indicate what was also considered news in those days. Perhaps the lady photographer was Alice Austen who regularly journeyed into Manhattan from her home in rural Staten Island to record (photogrphically) the people and places of the day."

(Editor's comment: Like Mr. Brey I wonder why John Bull was starved of Phonographs in 1892. Colonel Gouraud had certainly been in London since 1889 and if no other proof were needed, the recording he made of Florence Nightingale still exists today. We had some pictures in our early issues which were photographed by J. Lewis Young prior to writing his booklet in 1890, showing phonographs in use in an office, etc. We presume that there was a vacuum between the end of Col. Gouraud's dominance and the emergence of the Edison Bell organisation)

Echoes of Cuckoos

John Goslin

The success in Britain recently of the record "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine" prompts me to write these notes for other devotees of the "blest pair of sirens", Laurel and Hardy: with special reference to music, recordings and pianos.

Arthur Stanley Jefferson, alias Laurel, was born at Ulverston, (then) Lancashire in 1890 and died in 1965. Oliver Norvell Hardy was born in 1892 in Atlanta; and died in 1957. So the books say - but to me they are still alive, well and living in Smalltown, USA.

Though there is little of them on record, their 'shorts' are regularly repeated on British TV, and the following are of particular interest for their musical content, if you wish to capture it for private recording purposes. The recent "single" comes from their most musical film, "Way Out West" (1937); earlier in the film(one of their best generally) they do a nice dance routine to music; and at the end they go into the sunset with Rosina Lawrence, singing 'I'm going back to Dixie'.

The single 45 (UP 36026) is coupled with 'Honolulu Baby' from their superb "Sons of the Desert" (1933, but given as 1934 on the label). They are at a fraternity convention in Chicago (having convinced their wives they are in Honolulu for Olly's health) and are watching some minimally-clad hula girls doing a busby Berkeley routine. The record gives the vocal by Ty Parvis, but unfortunately cuts out some nice hot trumpet from the full soundtrack; and then peters out with a later clip of L. & H. strumming the same tune on a ukulele as they arrive home"from Honolulu", so that this side has little relevance to our duo.[1]

In fact, Olly had a pleasing light tenor voice and could apparently play the piano; at the opening of "Beau Chumps" (1931) you can catch him singing a ballad to his own accompaniment.

In a rather more obscure short, "Pardon Us" he sings again: as an escaped convict in disguise on a plantation, he croons a sentimental number, "Lazy Moon" to a choir backing. In the masterly "Below Zero" (1930) they are street musicians : Stan on harmonium and Olly on double bass, singing 'The Good Old Summertime" during a snowstorm in the Depression - - "Oh, Mr. Whiteman !" Olly is apostrophised by Kay Deslys from a window, as she pays him sufficient to"move on two blocks"; and one realises how similar in appearance, temperament and love of music these two great entertainers were.

Finally, aside from their parts in four musical comedies, "Fra Diavolo", "The Bohemian Girl", "Babes in Toyland" and "Swiss Miss", Olly renders a few lines of 'I'm sitting on top of the world' in "Oliver VIII" (1934) and sings happily to himself both in "Our Wife" (1931) and "Them Thar Hills" (1934) - a marvellous sequence in which Stan persists in stealing the 'pom - poms' at the end of the line.

L. & H. made a number of tours to Britain, and I saw them at the now defunct Boscombe Hippodrome on 15th. August, 1947. Last on the bill, "assisted by Harry Moreny", they performed a sketch, "Getting a driving licence". A sample of the quality of the wit :

MAN: . . Have you ever had any crashes?
OLLY: Yes, once. It was a dark night, and I was driving along....
STAN: That's when he fell asleep. (Baleful glance from Olly)
MAN: Then what?
STAN: We came to a notice saying, "No left turn", and....
MAN: But you said you couldn't read!
STAN: I can read reading, but I can't read writing.
MAN: Read this ! (Gives sheet of paper)
STAN: I can't. It's too near the paper....

But of course, it was entirely transformed into endearing humour, and Stan made much of a paper tube which kept sticking to one or other finger. After the sketch, Stan was left to sing, to 'Marcheta', this lugubrious ballad:

"I once had a garden of onions, of onions,
But after a few days I found
That worms came and ate up my onions, my onions,
So I sprinkled some salt on the ground.
But a terrible sight I beheld on that night,
The night that I stood at the halt,
For the worms, they had pulled up my onions, my onions (sob)
And (sob) were dipping them into (sob) the salt!

Then Olly sang 'Shine on, Harvest Moon' while Stan did a little tap-dance: and then Stan sprinkled a spoonful of sand for Olly to "dance" on! The rather mundane conclusion was their presentation of a Vernons Pools cheque for £10,346 - 16s. to a winner!

Pianos seem to have a special place in their affections - apart from those mentioned, they crop up in "Another fine mess" (1930), where Olly plays one; in "Night Owls" (1930) where they activate a pianola: "Way out West", where they hide in one: "Swiss Miss", where they try to move one across a mountain suspension bridge and meet a gorilla halfway; "Wrong again" (1929) where they credibly contrive to install a horse on a grand piano; "Big Business" (1929) where Stan destroys James Finlayson's instrument; "Beau Chumps", where Olly destroys one; and of course above all the unforgetable "The Music Box" of 1932.

This last is entirely concerned with their efforts to deliver a player piano up a

monstrous flight of steps and then into a house; finally arrived, they perform a delicious impromptu dance routine to a "Medley of Patriotic Tunes". This film won them their only Award; and the same year they came to England - Stan went to visit his father in Lancashire, and they made their only recording in London, on 18th. August, 1932, on 12-inch Columbia DX370, with a studio orchestra conducted by Van Phillips. The paper sleeve reads:

> "Take Laurel and Hardy home with you! Up to now you have only been able to enjoy Laurel and Hardy in the cinema. Now you can take them home and enjoy their fun in the family circle. This Columbia is their first and only gramophone record, and in addition to their funny fooling there is given for the first time their quaint little theme tune, the "Dance of the Cuckoos."

The label reads: "Hal Roach and Metro Goldwyn Mayer present..." and I understand that this record was never issued in America. Surprisingly, it is very rarely found among 'secondhand' record piles, so could only have sold in small quantities.

On one side, they do a crosstalk routine, in course of which Stan noisily eats a hard boiled egg and enquires if Olly has any nuts (evidently 'quoting' from "County Hospital" of the same year, where Stan, having "nothing else to do" visits bedridden Olly with a gift of 'hardboiled eggs and nuts.' Olly indignantly rejects such binding fare, whereupon Stan attacks an egg and chaos ensues.) Once again, pianos come into it, as the side concludes with Stan's desire to have his piano over from the States, as he has left their return tickets on top of it! On side two, there is some more brief patter before the band plays a tediously repetitive version of the "Dance of the Cuckoos".

This leads me on to an intriguing discovery, on the eight-inch Eclipse record, No. 288. Fellow collectors of hot music will know that this offering by "Phil Allen's Merrymakers" is the only one listed by Brian Rust in his jazz discography, as probably by Jay Wilbur, playing a good extrovert number entitled 'Since I fell in love with Emmalina.' However, the other side is "Dance of the Cuckoos" (giving the composer, incidentally, as Steinberg - omitted from DX 370). This is, en passant, a much better version! - but it includes a vocal, and part of the words are as follows:

> "All the folks have just gone wild
> Oh, what a how d'ye do
> It is because two funny chaps
> Thought of, oh, something new....
> If you're hardy, you're all right
> You will get by somehow
> Maybe you'll get a laurel wreath
> Stuck on your noble brow."

It was recorded in London circa 17th. October, 1932, i.e. two months after L & H recorded their disc; and I conclude therefore, this was a witty and fittingly-worded tribute to them on their Film Award. A quick survey shows that no other British dance band of the day recorded this tune, except one I have found on Decca F 3186 by Arthur Lally. This is a "xylophone novelty record" featuring Rudy Starita: but the label does not show that there is also a vocal chorus by Al Bowlly virtually the same as the Eclipse, but omitting the last four lines quoted above. Further, the composer credit is given to "Laurel, Hardy" !! It was recorded on 21st. September, 1932. To add to the confusion, in a BBC TV tribute to Laurel and Hardy, there was an interview with the composer of the "Cuckoo" tune, one Marvin T. Hatley - who wrote it as a radio time signal. So who wrote the words remains obscure.

Finally, I have a query! In many of their short films (early 1930's) we hear the same

five or six little tunes as background music: a brisk, summoning tune; a bleating, pathetic one; a cheerful, active one; and so on. Can anyone put titles to these, or name the band(s) responsible? Could one have been a Ben Selvin group? Any light on this would be pleasing to have.

But meanwhile - pardon me for one moment - My ear is full of milk. .....[2]

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1. I understand that there is an LP in preparation with a wide variety of soundtrack recordings on it. (UAG 29676)
2. Splendid quote from "Going Bye-bye" (1934)

Recommended reading: "Laurel and Hardy" by Charles Barr, Studio Vista (London) 1967
"The Films of Laurel and Hardy" by William K. Everson, Citadel Press, (New York) 1967

The Kinetophonograph

Alan Brown

The idea of combining 'animated photographs' with the Phonograph to produce a combined sound and visual record, was not new in 1895, nor was Edison the first to suggest it. As early as 1878, an English barrister, Wordsworth Donisthorpe, had suggested such a combination[1] and another, better known film pioneer, William Friese-Greene put forward the same idea in 1889.

Edison's interest was probably first aroused by a suggestion made to him in February, 1888, when he was visited by Edweard Muybridge[2], that the phonograph could be used with good effect, during demonstrations of the Zoopraxiscope. Since the Zoopraxiscope; (Muybridge's projector-like apparatus used for showing his photographs of phases of movement) had been shown during the previous six years with great success, Edison probably appreciated more quickly than Muybridge, that, with such a combination an untapped commercial market was available.

By October of the same year Edison turned his attention to inventing an improved method of taking and presenting motion pictures. He wrote [3]

> "I am experimenting upon an instrument which does for the eye what the Phonograph does for the ear, which is the recording and reproduction of things in motion, and in such a form as to be both cheap, practical and convenient."

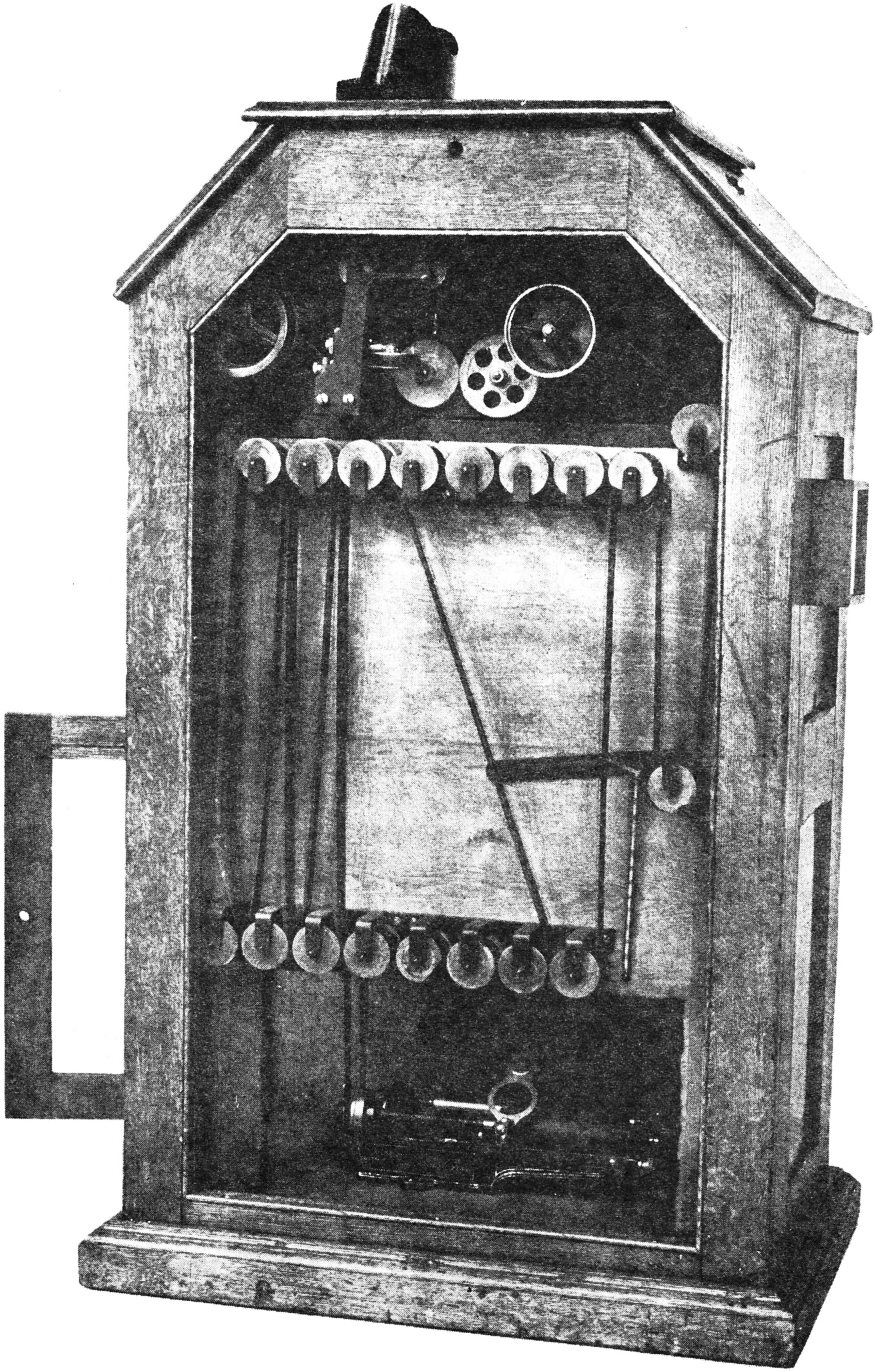
If the camera and the Phonograph are used together;

> ".... the illusion is complete, and we may see and hear a whole opera as perfectly as if actually present, although the actual performance may have taken place years before."

These sentences are most interesting, since they show that Edison initially regarded films as a further development of his Phonograph rather then as an invention on its own, and his rare talent, combining both a visionary inventor and a practical businessman is shown here very clearly.

The work of bringing his ideas to fruition was entrusted to his assistant William Kennedy Laurie Dickson, and, fortunately Dickson has left an account of his work in a little book which he published in New York in 1895.[4] The work on motion pictures continued steadily, if slowly, but combining the Phonograph was by no means straightforward, although,

> "The synchronous attachment of photography with the Phonograph was early contemplated in order to record and give back the impressions to the eye as well as the ear.... the establishment of harmonious relations between Kinetograph" (the camera) "and



Phonograph was a harrowing task, and would have broken the spirit of inventors less inured to hardship and discouragement than Edison's veterans."[5]

These difficulties caused a serious delay in the production of the combined instrument, and, as will be shown, resulted in very few being built. Meanwhile the Kinetoscope (without the phonograph) appeared in America in April, 1894, and by October of the same year had appeared in London, being shown at 70. Oxford Street.

In the same month, Edison gave an interview which clearly suggests that the Kinetophone was still not ready for the showmen.

Q. "The Phonograph and Kinetoscope are both on a manufacturing basis are they not?"

A. "Yes, the Phonograph development is assured, but the Kinetoscope is still only a scientific novelty in a form to show its possibilities, it will eventually do for the eye what the Phonograph does for the ear. Ultimately, however, the two will act in conjunction so as to produce and record the exact image of all life's actions."

The use of the word 'ultimately' is surely significant in this context.

This delay was fatal businesswise, added to which Edison did not patent either the Kinetoscope or the combined instrument in Great Britain. The inevitable result was that enterprising showmen rigged up their own Kinetoscopes/Kinetophones. In this arrangement, the Phonograph acted only as a background or accompaniment - the sound was not synchronised with the action[6] as Edison had wanted it to be, but the novelty value was still there, and, in practical terms, Edison had lost the British market, for few showmen would, under these circumstances pay the increased price he asked for the combined instrument.[7]

According to one film historian[8], only fifty true Edison Kinetophones were built and sold, so we in Britain are fortunate that one is preserved at the Science Museum in London[9].

Early in 1895, Dickson must have at last solved his problem of 'harmonious relations' for in his 1895 booklet he becomes quite lyrical describing such a combination!

"The inconceivable swiftness of the photographic succession, and the exquisite synchronism of the phonographic attachment have removed the last trace of automatic action, and the illusion is complete."

The commercial success of the Kinetoscope/Kinetophone had shown businessmen and inventors that money was to be made from film exhibition, and further developments were not long in coming.

Film projectors, using celluloid film, had been built in America by Eugene Lauste and Charles F. Jenkins by the end of 1894, in England by the middle of 1895, and by 1896 the first Englishman had built and demonstrated his projector in London.

The obvious commercial advantages of being able to show to hundreds at once, for roughly the same outlay in equipment, was a point not lost on exhibitors, who thereupon promptly abandoned the earlier instruments.

(The writer would like to hear from anyone who has, or knows the locations of Kinetoscopes or Kinetophones, other than in the Science Museum, London.)

NOTES 1. 'Talking Photographs', "Nature", 1878.

2. Muybridge notes this in his preface to 'Animals in Motion', 1899.

3. Quoted from Motion Picture Caveat No.1. Illustrated and described by H. G. Bowen - 'Edison's early motion picture experiments' 1955, and reprinted in 'Technological history of motion

picture and television'. California Press, 1967.

4."History of the Kinetograph Kinetoscope and Kineto-Phonograph" 8vo. 52 pp. New York, 1895. Copies of this booklet were shipped to England, overprinted and given away at the first (official) Kinetoscope exhibition at 70. Oxford Street, London. It was reprinted a few years ago.

5.History of the Kinetograph, etc. 1895.

6.The writer knows of a single exception, where a synchronised instrument was probably built in England in 1895.

7.Details of the prices are in 'A million and one nights' by T. Ramsaye,London, Cass. 1967.

8.Wilfred Day, who died in 1936, and was one of the first to recognise the value of early Cinema equipment. For many years from 1920, his collection was on view at the Science Museum, London, but has now been sold to a film museum in France.

9.Presented in 1930.

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